

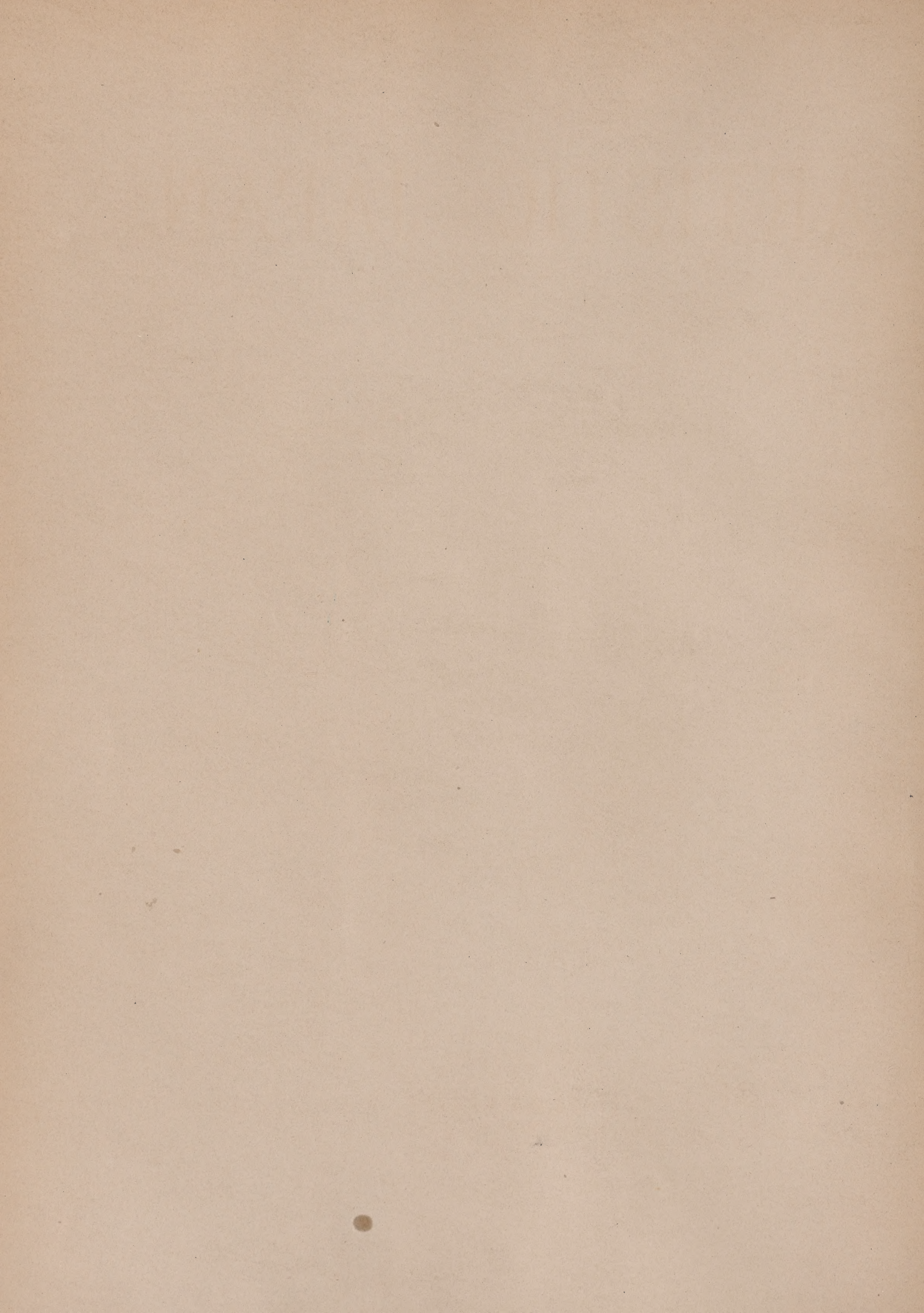


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ARTISTIC JAPAN.



ARTISTIC JAPAN:

Illustrations and Essays.

COLLECTED BY

S. BING.

VOLUME II

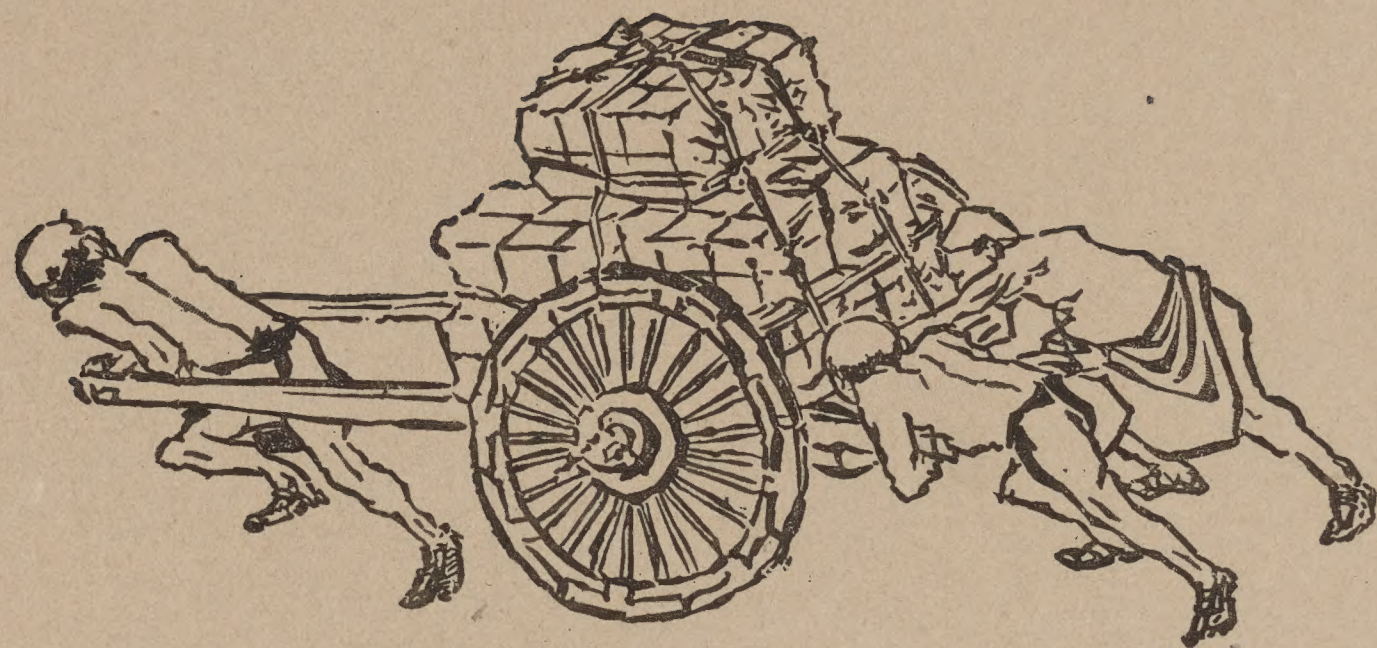
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ARTISTIC JAPAN:

A Monthly Illustrated Journal

OF

ARTS AND INDUSTRIES

COMPILED BY

S. BING

WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF

MR. WM. ANDERSON, MM. PH. BURTY, VICTOR CHAMPIER, TH. DURET, L. FALIZE,
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- EA. **Decorative Design.** Bamboos.
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THE ART OF
ENGRAVING IN JAPAN.

Three men contribute to the production of a printed plate
—the designer, who originates the subject repre-
sented, who gives it form and life; the
engraver, who transports the

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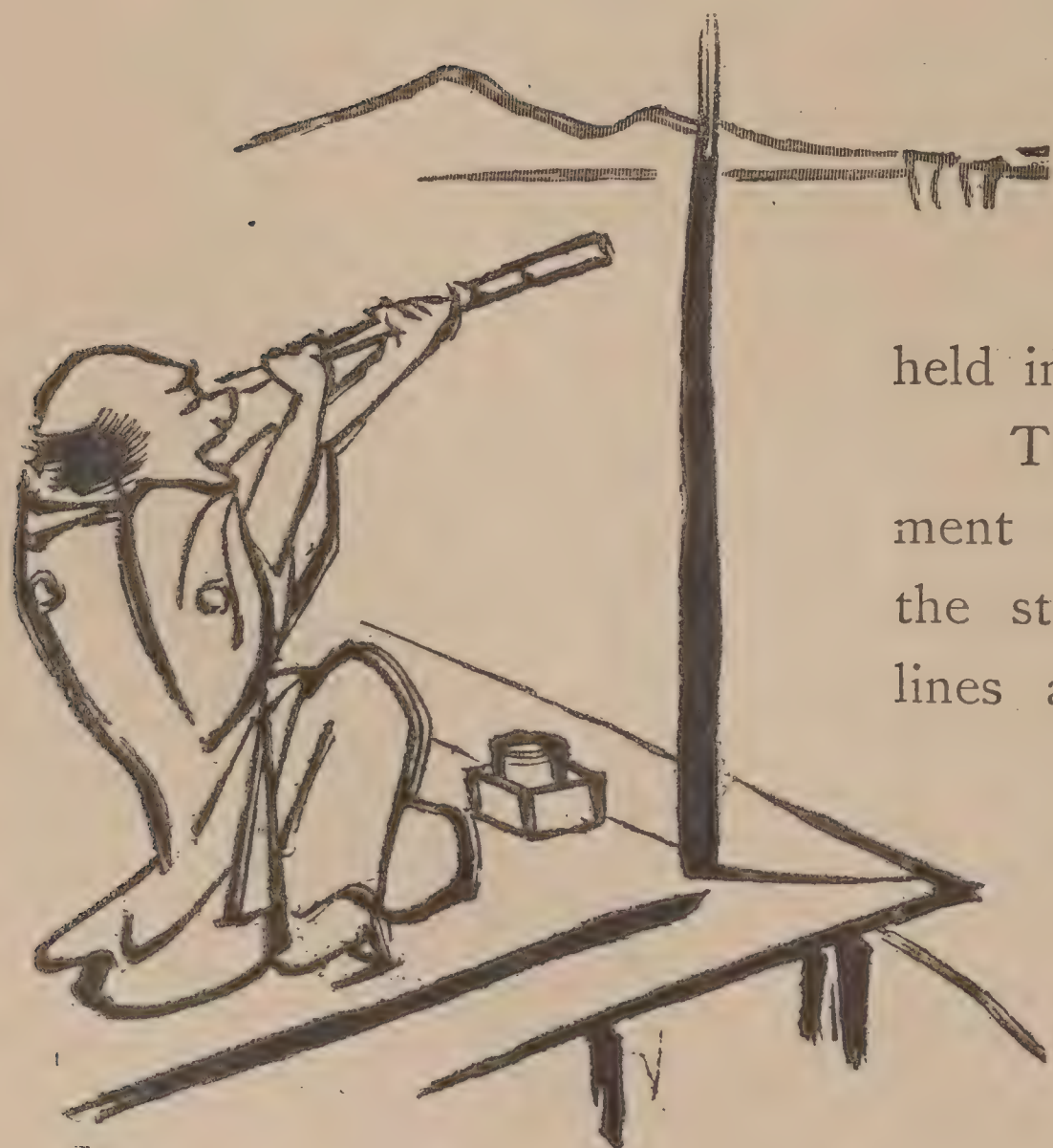
design on to wood or copper; and the printer, who produces from the wood or metal the finished print. In Europe the designer and the engraver are generally artists, and the printer is a workman who takes from a machine any number of uniform proofs. In Japan the printer, equally with the designer and engraver, is an artist, working with an artist's taste and fancy. Having only the most simple means and materials, and no machine, he knows no repetition or stiffness, but in the choice and mixing of the colours on the plate he makes endless variations, and so avoids all monotony or uniformity.

In the selection of Japanese engravings, taking those where the three artists—designer, engraver, and printer—have put their very best work, one finds many specimens perfect in their way, and which are practically unsurpassable. In engraving, the Japanese have always held to certain methods, which give to their productions a certain special originality of their own; they have confined themselves to the use of wood on which to engrave designs, which have been drawn by the artists themselves by means of the brush.



When a European writes he employs a pen, and occasionally he may use one for drawing; but more often he uses a pencil; but when he paints, he invariably takes a brush. In Japan and China it is not at all the same; there, when one writes, draws, or paints, the implement is the same—the brush, held in the hand, raised up over the paper.

The result of the constant use of the same instrument is great dexterity in the handling of it; and as the strokes of a brush filled with ink or colour make lines and strokes that one cannot alter, certainty of



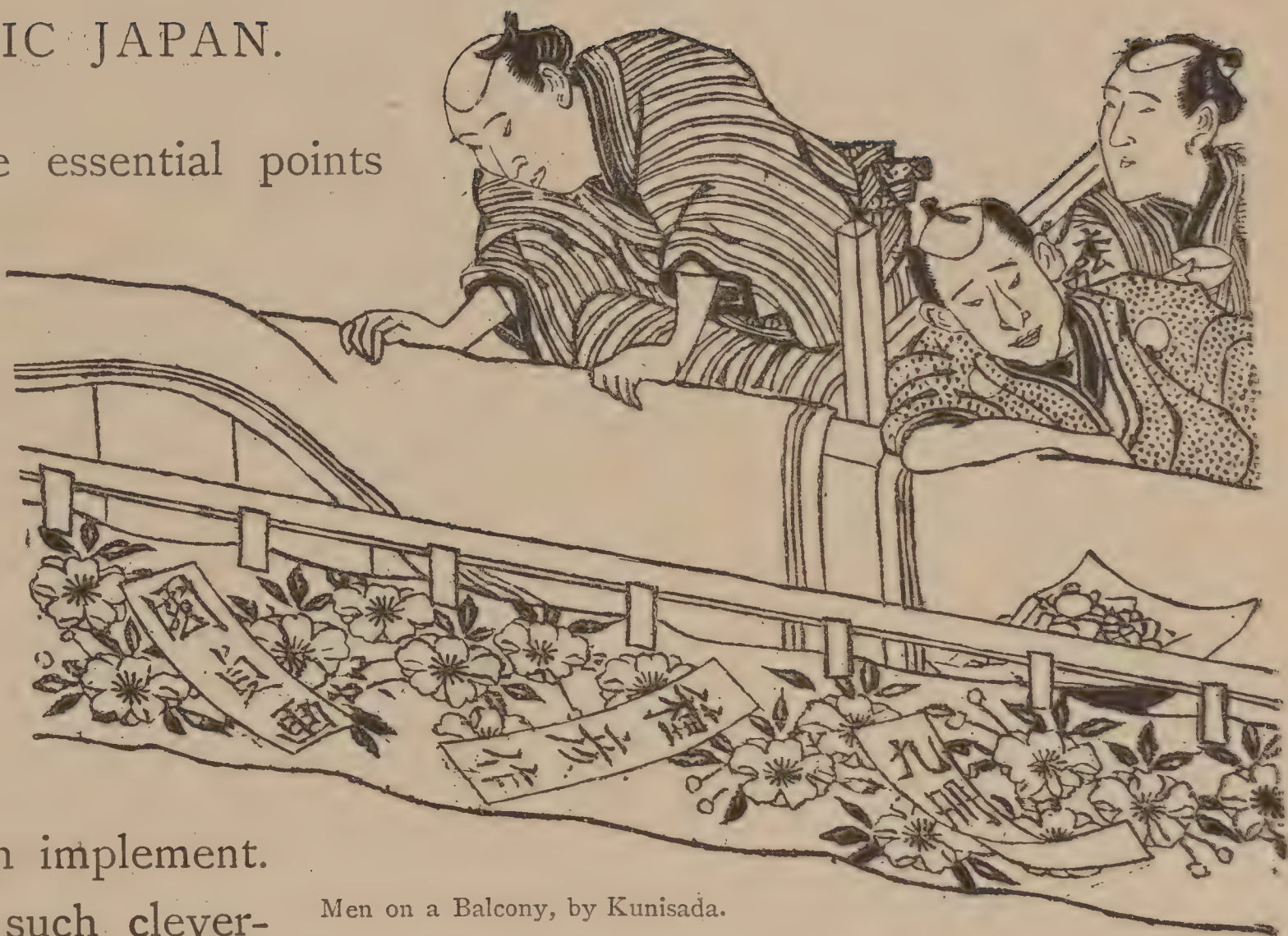
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touch and boldness of hand are the essential points that every artist has been obliged to seek after and obtain.

The paper on which the design has been traced having been glued to the wood on which it is to be cut, the engraver sets to work to reproduce in the wood all the suppleness and fulness which the design on the paper had received from the use of the brush as an implement.

Japanese engravers have arrived at such cleverness in this respect that even an experienced eye can hardly detect designs direct from the brush. When one adds that Japanese engravings are as a rule taken on the very finest paper, and that in the first state they are of great rarity, one can understand that they combine all the necessary conditions to charm the eye of an artist, and to excite the covetousness of collectors.

The art of engraving on wood came to Japan from China. As a means of illustrating books it is comparatively modern; the *Isé monogatari* of 1604 is the first remarkable specimen of it. It is an illustrated romance. The engravings in it are in an archaic and rather clumsy style, but already show



Men on a Balcony, by Kunisada.



in conception and execution the characteristics of the art as it is in its present development.

During the seventeenth century books with engravings were rare, until the time of Ishigawa Moronobu, who flourished from 1680 to about 1700. Moronobu has treated very nearly all the styles to which the art at that time could be applied; he illustrated romances—"meishos"—or descriptions of countries, a series of books with plates, some of types of the



By Issai.

ARTISTIC JAPAN.

Japanese people, others of beasts and plants, very realistically given or employed as decorative motives. His style, although archaic, is full of force and movement. It is, as it were, the entrance to the study of engraving in Japan.

The impulse given by Moronobu was never to die away. During the seventeenth century artists who illustrated books followed each other without interruption, becoming more and more numerous. We must in the first rank place Sukénobu, who produced his best works in 1730. He applied himself to the representation of Japanese women under all aspects, and occupying themselves in every way; and as stuffs were at that date highly decorated, so the women he has drawn are enveloped in robes showing a wondrous diversity of motives and colours.

Sukénobu had pupils and successors who bring us down to the close of the eighteenth century. The art of printing in colours, already for some time originated and perfected, was now adapted for book illustration. From Moronobu, by a series of intermediates down to Hokusai, one can connect chronologically a library of books or albums of engravings of every kind of shape, style, or impression, representing a world very original and lively.

Engraving, properly speaking—the printed image on a loose sheet—developed itself side by side with the book or album. So the most ancient specimens of the art of printing in Japan are engravings. These were religious images of the roughest description that were sold in the temples of Buddha, and which represented that god or some local saint. Quite at the end of the seventeenth century, under the impulse given by Moronobu, Japanese engraving entered upon a phase which was shortly to be greatly enlarged—the reproduction of the faces of actors





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and scenes in the theatre. The first specimens of these were printed in black, like all the engravings of the seventeenth century; but shortly after they were touched with a brush, and then, between 1710 and 1720, they commenced to be printed in one or two tones of colour.

Coloured engravings now made rapid progress, and in the course of the eighteenth century arrived at great finish. First of all there are the Torii, who succeeded each other and form a complete school. They produced figures of actors printed in a sombre tone, but very vigorous, and which must form the foundation of every collection of coloured prints. After them Katsugawa Shunshô, the master of Hokusai, with his two pupils, Shunyei and Shunko, have cleverly depicted actors and their contemporaries.

Extending coloured engraving beyond the theatrical world, powerful artists adapted it to the portrayal of feminine figures, popular scenes, social gatherings, scenes from romances, history, battles, and lastly to landscape. It is thus that at the end of the eighteenth century, from 1770 to 1800, Japanese coloured prints arrive at such perfection with a series of great designers, who by the fulness and purity of their outlines, and the harmony of their composition, have left many admirable works; notably such men as Harunobu, Kionaga, Yeishi, Toyokuni, the elder, and lastly

Utamaro.

Every one of these artists has his peculiarity and possesses certain qualities; but if it were necessary to choose one from the others for the first place, I should select Kionaga. His strong style, free from all mannerisms, grasps life in a searching manner. The variety of attitude, the ease of pose, the facial expression, and



Vignette, taken from an envelope for a letter.



Fugiyama, by Hokusai.



By Issai.

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From *The Hundred Views of Fujiyama*, by Hokusai.



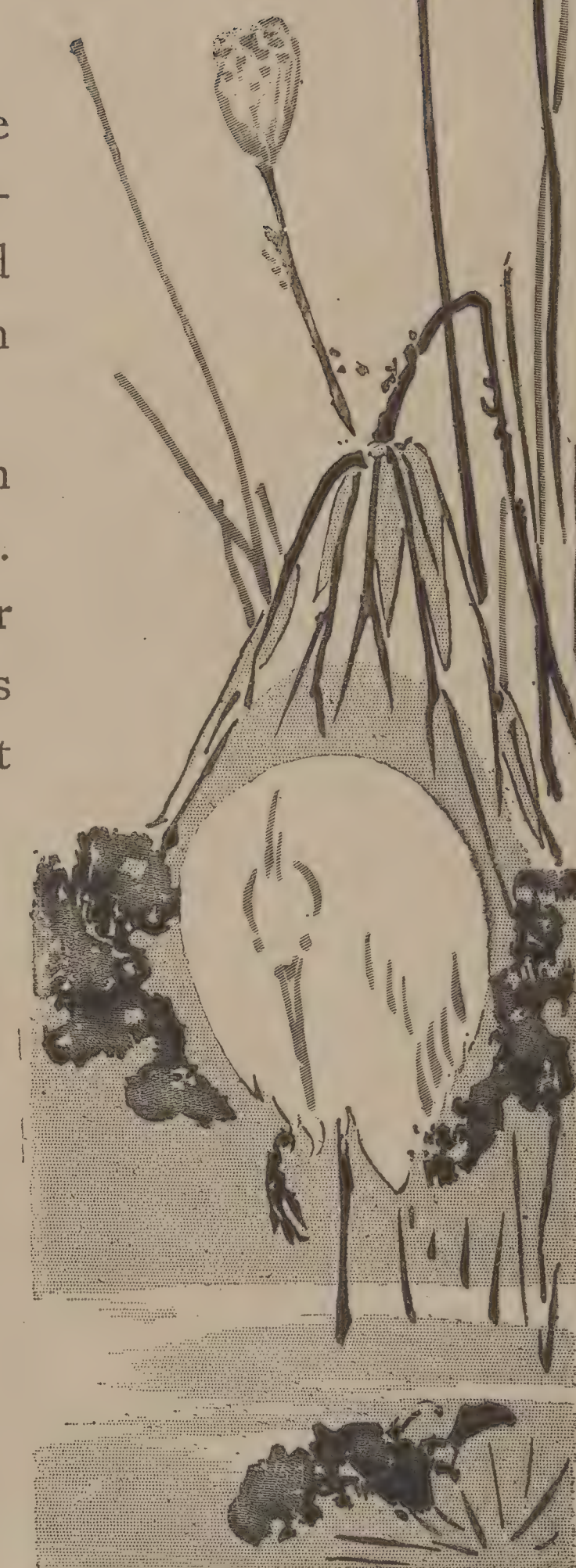
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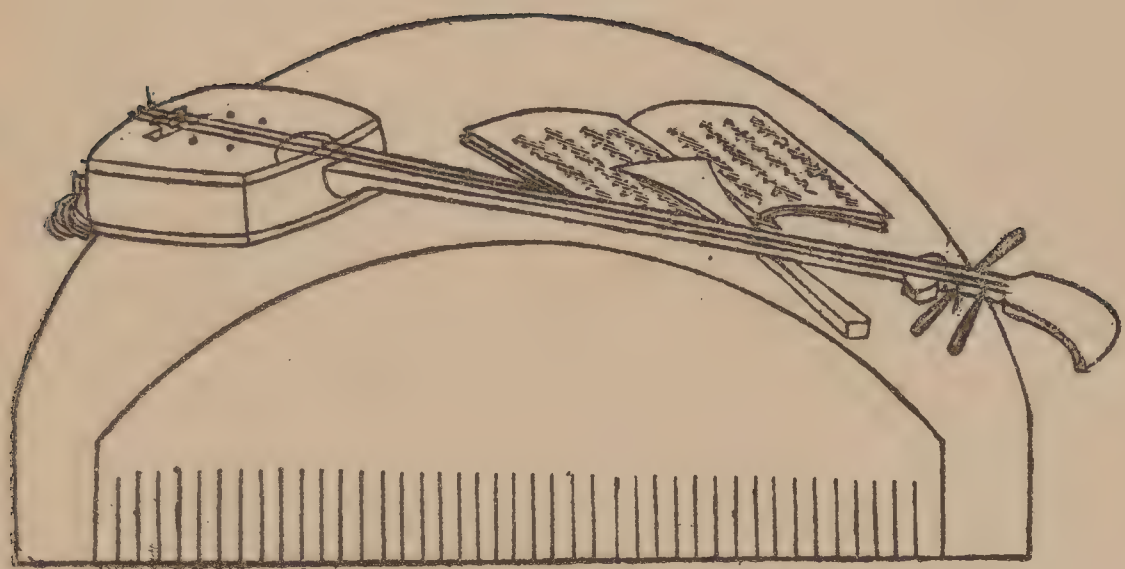
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Vignette, taken from an envelope for a letter.

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Decoration for a Comb, designed by Issai.

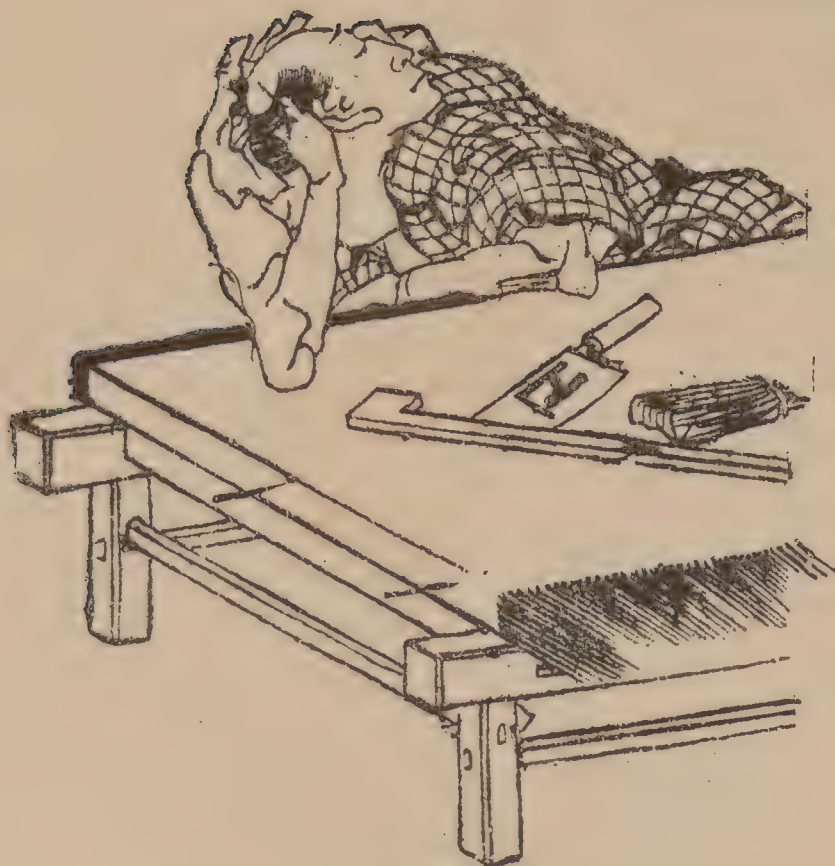
the broad treatment of the landscape serving for background, make his work very important.

The larger coloured engravings of the present century lose the great elegance which characterised those of the last century. They have not the same harmony of lines and soberness of colouring; but

in spite of having become entirely popular art, they still maintain great power and vitality, when treated by Toyokuni, the younger, Kunisada, Kuniyoshi, and beyond all Hiroshigé, the artist of landscape. Whilst larger coloured prints were losing some of their refinement, another species full of delicacy arose and developed itself. I allude to those refined compositions called *Surimonos*, of which artists, in the earlier half of this century,



produced a very small number of proofs, and which they gave to their friends or distributed among the members of the little tea-drinking societies on the occasion of certain fêtes and anniversaries. Printed in the most careful way, first in quiet and subdued tones, and later with metallic lustre added, these *surimonos* were unequalled and unique in the annals of the printer's art.



By Hokusai.

Hokusai — born 1760, died 1849 — arrived as a sort of giant to crown the art of printing in Japan. He appeared at an early age under the name of Shunrô, and as he laboured without ceasing until his death, his works extend to a period of over fifty years. He found it possible also to take up every style of Japanese engraving, so his

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productions are of an unlimited and surprising extent. Illustrations for romances, history, poetry, from the tiny popular books to the editions of forty, fifty, and eighty volumes ; endless books and albums, showing in every phase life in Japan ; men, beasts, and landscape, and

selections of ornament intended for trade purposes ; instruction by example in the art of drawing, large coloured plates in every style, endless *suri-monos*, notices, maps, and industrial engravings ;—Hokusai has treated every form with equal success. His work, overflowing with life and movement, is full of truth ; it includes popular comicalities and pathetic scenes—the grotesque and the terrible. His work constitutes a monument complete in itself, which embraces everything to be seen by the eye or invented in the brain of a Japanese.



A Village in the Province of Shinano, by Hokusai.

THÉODORE DURET.



Taken from the *Gakashiki*, by Hokusai.

DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

In the article on engraving which forms the chief matter of this number, Mr. T. Duret has drawn attention to three names—viz., Moronobu, Kiyonaga, and Hokusai—and these therefore have the first place among our series of illustrations.

Plate HB is after an engraving by Hishigawa Moronobu, one of the earlier masters, who at the close of the seventeenth century laid the foundations of an era of great notability in the annals of book illustration in Japan, having given the best efforts of his genius to his art.

In his engravings the absence of colours and of every complicated method is noticeable. The manner of working, alone shows the genius, and it does so with great decision, without the help of any elaborate modelling, giving an almost sculptured appearance of relief to the figures represented, enduing them with the appearance of life, and gathering them together in groups full of movement representative of the heroic and popular characters of their era.

The Plate HB is from the *Wakoku Hiaku Jo*, literally "Japanese Women," a work in three volumes, which reproduces all sorts and conditions of Japanese women in their every-day employments.

According to a common custom of the time a portion of each page of the book is given up to the text, which offers some explanation for the picture, and is often some original idea, expressed in picturesque language.

Plate IIII, after Kiyonaga, shows us that eighty years of careful technical study certainly add a charm to the severe formula he laid down for himself at the commencement of his artistic career. A collection of charmingly subdued and striking bright colours has been created by his hands, and he adorns his work with lovely combinations of them. His prints show complete mastery over his art.

Torii Kiyonaga (about 1770) played an important part in the development of engraving. He resolutely broke through the archaic style of the other Torii, his predecessors, as shown in the figures of the actors of Kiyomitsu, of which a specimen was given in No. V.; he reached an advanced stage of art quite modern in style, in which we see landscapes representing great stretches of country full of atmosphere and light, with various distances in perfectly correct perspective, and animated by thoroughly life-like and strong figures. The one before us is a view on the banks of the Sumida gawa (*gawa* means "river"), with its charming banks on which the town of Yeddo is built, the home of hundreds of artists. This engraving only forms a portion of the whole composition, which spreads over three leaves, of which each is double the size of our reproduction. This plate is not borrowed from any book, but belongs to a kind of engraving that was published separately, called in Japanese, *Ichī-mai-ye* (pictures in one piece).

In Plate IE we are still on the luxuriantly planted banks of the Sumida, this time led there by Hokusai. He shows us a small family of people making their way, some autumn evening, by the side of the river. First of all, there is a young widow—this shown by her girdle being tied in front—and two girls accompanying her; while they are followed by a little street boy, who has been hired to carry the purchases made, no doubt, by these young ladies, at some fête. On the

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other hand, there is the river, with a curtain of trees beyond it, and behind them there are seen some great white banners. The figures, rather awkward, and of an almost comical appearance, seem to be very different from the stately matrons that Kiyonaga has shown us. Hokusai himself will also, shortly, alter the idea he has formed of women; he will make, in time, heroic figures to people his romances of chivalry; and when he has undertaken the portrayal of popular life, he will discover models of more solidity. But in his earlier years, when the young artist loves the poetry of refined forms, he cannot produce designs in which heaviness could be seen—and his hand has not yet that astonishing dexterity which will allow him to play wondrous tricks with his brush. But even now his execution is clever, and almost feminine in its refinement, and modest in its pretensions. Do not let us regret this. In this early, rather timid manner, the artist has left us a world of charming beings full of poetic feeling, and which bring to our mind the old nooks which Ghilandajo and Botticelli have drawn. These reminiscences are only applicable to the figures themselves, for the landscape in which they move surprises us by its modern character and the method by which it is treated is entirely original. One great principle is adhered to throughout—absolute simplicity. The artist has firmly resolved to eliminate from his sight anything that might have a disturbing effect in proximity to the particular subject he wishes to bring before us—a group of people, standing out clearly in the brightest colours against a vast distance, bounded only by a well-defined horizon. This is the theme proposed for himself in this instance. One can discuss, if one chooses, the object of this principle, but we ought at any rate to do homage to a genius capable of putting a question to us so clearly.

Plate IC. Mandarin Ducks, by Hokusai. It is curious to come straight from the youthful work of this master, to the page of birds which shows us the handiwork of the artist towards the decline of his life. As he has grown older, his ideas have enlarged themselves, and at the same time his brush has acquired freedom, and a strength more and more master-like—and here we see him at his greatest perfection. One point only still remains unchanged with the old man among all those that we have seen altered since his early works; that is, the empty space round the subject presented, by which means it is shown with the greatest intensity. In the plate before us, a shower of snowflakes fallen on the ground alone break the repose of the surroundings, and in spite of a rather minute representation of them, the impression conveyed by the two birds, taking the whole page, is marvellously striking.

This engraving is taken from a volume containing only fifteen designs, all of this shape. The book is considered the finest specimen of its kind. Its great rarity is to be deplored, but it seems that only a very limited number were printed in the first instance. It is called "Shashin Gwafu"—which mean drawings "from nature"—and the preface of the book accentuates the meaning of the title. It was written by a friend of the artist's, called Hirata, and drew great attention to the genius of Hokusai's work.

The preface bears witness, besides, to the great estimation in which the artist was held, at any rate, among some of his contemporaries, whose opinion of him seems to coincide with ours. "Hokusai," the writer says, "is unlike any one else. While all his predecessors were more or less slaves to classic traditions and hard rules, he alone has allowed his brush to draw according to the feelings of his heart, and he executes what he sees with his eyes, which love nature." It is certain that this friendly admiration was but little exaggerated.

Plate AJA. Sparrows among bamboos, after a Kakemono by Nōsan, school of Shijo.
Sparrows and bamboos in Japan are associated by nature, and every artist has depicted

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them thus, and there is, besides, nothing more tempting to the master of the brush than this plant with its supple and delicate branches bending in graceful curves at every breath of wind; and nothing in the world could better complete the picture than its most customary inhabitants, with their lively ways, hopping from branch to branch, in every imaginable attitude, but with various changes which defy the sharpest eye. How wonderfully do the Japanese depict these ever-altering poses! We hear of set rules, and it may be that the children learn in their earliest youth to draw in various attitudes the body of a bird, just in the way that they learn to draw the geometrical outline of a house. But it also seems that, in the most diversified designs, here and there sections of birds are introduced in order to train the eye in their anatomy.

Plate AJB. A piece of satin, date sixteenth century, with a decoration of peacocks. The ground of it is worn and the colours are faded; but, thanks to the excellence of the manufacture, the design of the decoration still shows in all its original clearness. When one looks at the strength of the outline and the correctness of the drawing, and the noble bearing of the bird standing on the trunk of a tree, one feels as if one was regarding a picture rather than a fragment of clothing, and that it had no other object but to take the place of some water-colour drawing, with its fineness and delicate silky appearance. Such effects are hardly to be recommended as examples for our workmen, except as decorations for our rooms; but they are appropriate to the grandeur of the dresses of the nobles in Japan, where, contrary to our customs, materials of great width are worn, which lend themselves to the showing off of large and handsome compositions for designs.

The pattern of the robe of which this is a portion represents a design formed of peacocks on the branches of pine trees. It is made, to a certain extent, in the same way as the finer European stuffs of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

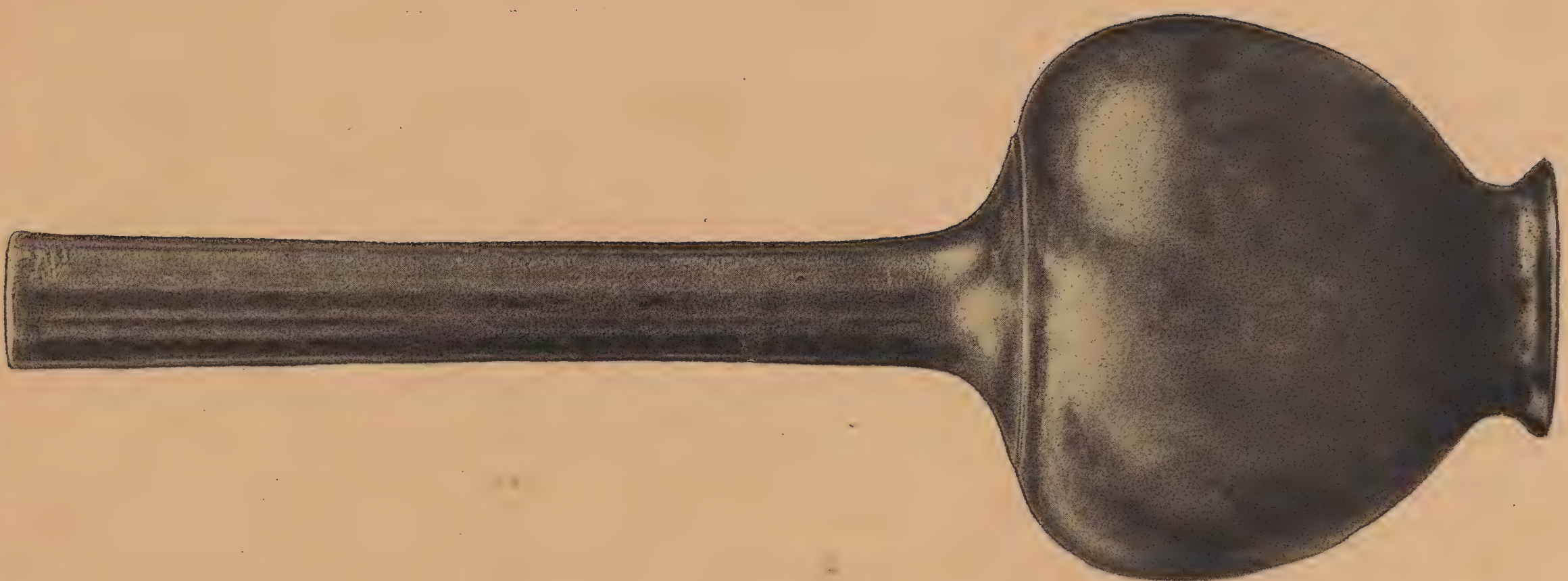
Plates DI, EA and HH show us a series of decorative designs. The first is a ray-like design, consisting of the needles of the pine trees, which are combined with round figures with cut-out edges. A certain brightness is given by the star-shaped ornaments, which, although they are somewhat stiff, remind one of petals of flowers.

The design (EA) of bamboos almost amuses one by the picturesque entanglement of its branches. Seen alone, on a white ground, this design shows imperfections, which, from a decorative point of view, leave the eye unsatisfied, and it is certain that it was intended to be shown on some solid ground which should bring the scattered lines together and display them in their true beauty.

HH is a specimen of a very natural form of decoration. It is formed of trunks of trees, with rough and cracked bark, and their branches cut off—only a few twigs carelessly thrown, as it were, to break the monotony of the ground with their delicate shoots.

Plate HF. Three vases in bronze, date eighteenth century. The centre one, and the one on the right, are reproduced at half their real size, and the conical tube is reduced two-thirds. The last-mentioned specimen loses, by reduction, the fulness of outline which constitutes its particular beauty. The perpendicular ring which is noticed at the level of the handles is for fastening the vase to the wall.





HF



Handwritten signature: *W. S. P. S.*

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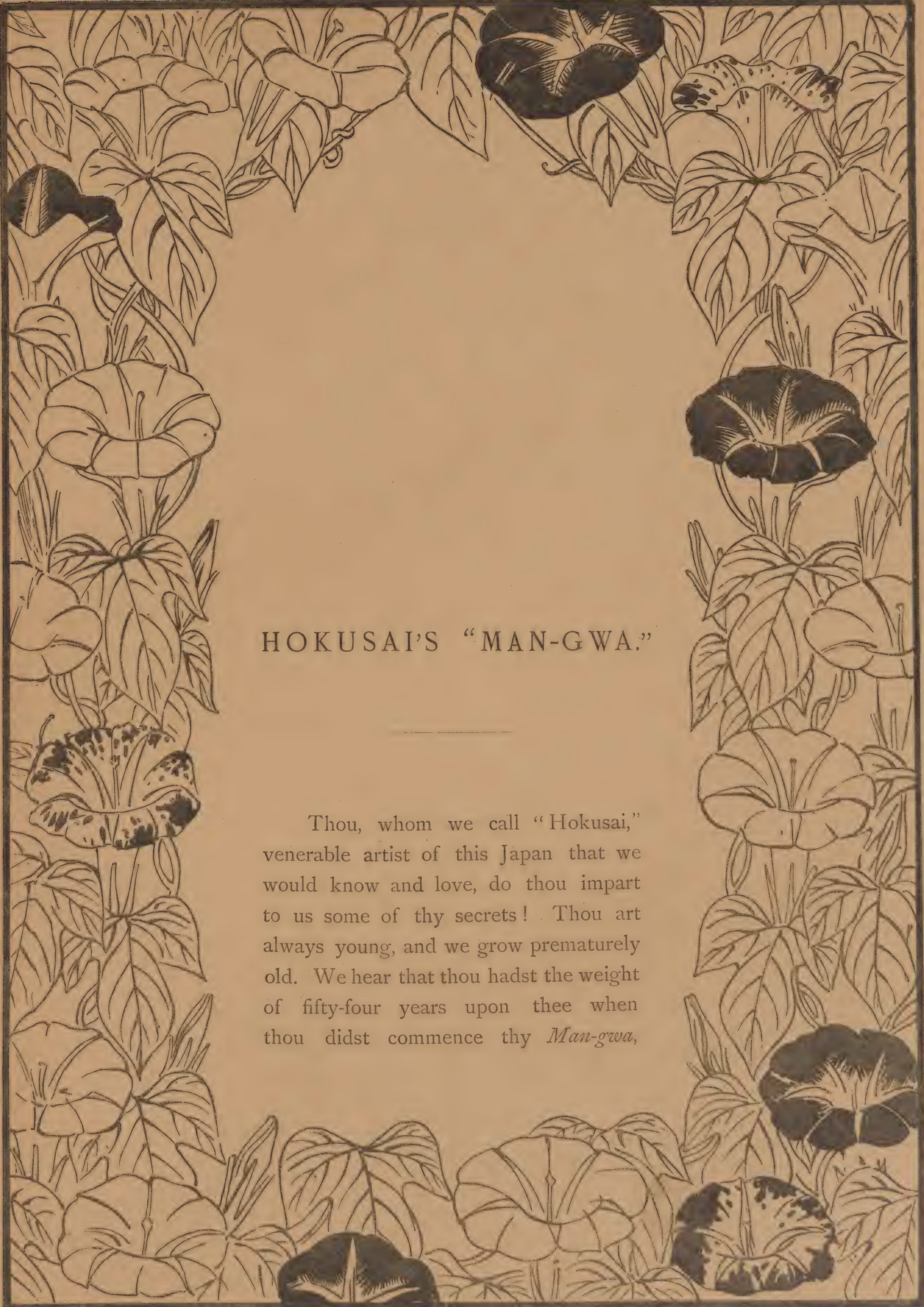


おきく
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HOKUSAI'S "MAN-GWA."

Thou, whom we call "Hokusai,"
venerable artist of this Japan that we
would know and love, do thou impart
to us some of thy secrets! Thou art
always young, and we grow prematurely
old. We hear that thou hadst the weight
of fifty-four years upon thee when
thou didst commence thy *Man-gwa*,

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but we know that thou created it in the spirit of a youth of twenty years. Repeat to us, Genius of the North, that thou hast always loved Nature—tell us that she is a sweet mistress! One will perhaps look at her with more loving eyes when the age of spectacles is reached. What tender feelings must she have for him who, since his first youth, has given himself up to her worship!

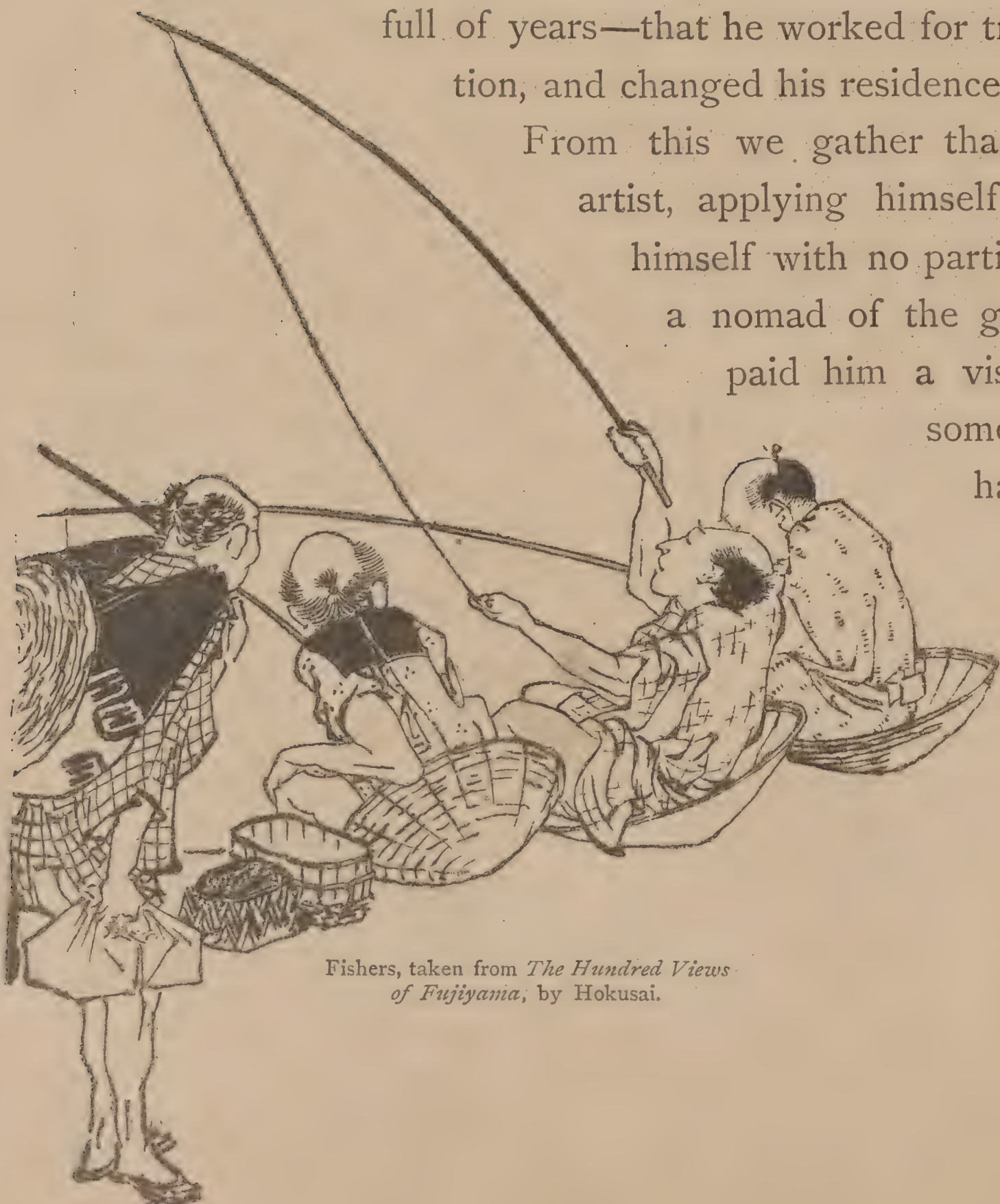
Is it merely a love-affair or a solemn marriage? It argues, somehow or other, that Nature and the Japanese must be very opposed in sentiment to each other that we should be in error when we state that they had formed a love-match, an indestructible and passionate alliance.

Whatever may happen, whatever discovery may be made, whatever the yet unknown, the extreme East, may have in reserve for us, we shall always be sure that the Japanese have been real lovers of nature, and that Hokusai is a charming entertainer. One might well have carved on his modest tomb the verses that the scholars of the Renaissance composed for the tomb of Virgil, "Here rests he whom Nature feared as her rival, and whose funeral seemed, as it were, her own."

If it is admitted that Hokusai is worthy a place in the first rank of independent and original artists, one must assign to him immediately a characteristic which he shares with the most highly inspired of the masters of our Western Art, namely, unconsciousness. It is clear that this wonderful man never knew his own value. We know that he lived in poverty, died at an advanced age and full of years—that he worked for trade purposes, did much book-illustration, and changed his residence and his name according to his fancy.

From this we gather that he was a philosophical and simple artist, applying himself to all branches of art, identifying himself with no particular one—in fact, an inspired being, a nomad of the great artist-family. If we could have

paid him a visit some fifty years ago, perhaps in some little room in Yedo, and if we had told him that what came from his brush would in the hereafter be an invaluable and world-wide lesson—he would in all probability have laughed at us. And perhaps



Fishers, taken from *The Hundred Views of Fujiyama*, by Hokusai.

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we might have done him harm—we might have altered his simplicity.

Japan was in his time in a healthy state; but there were evidently then, as now, various forms of public opinion. That of the old school attached itself to ancient forms, as a protest against the popular school which also had its public. The genius of Hokusai pleased the humble mind, whose instinctive criticism appreciated the novelty of his manner—an æstheticism more liberal, with stronger lines and greater wealth of fancy combined with a thorough intention of following Nature in her most rapid changes, than the schools which preceded it.

Hokusai worked because of his personal desire to do so—because he longed to create—like Rembrandt when he engraved on copper—without thinking of himself. He threw to the winds his lovely works, which disappeared it mattered not where. They now return to us, forming hundreds of volumes which we do not hesitate to add to the library of Art which includes the whole world.

It is not our purpose now to study Hokusai as a painter—he was a great painter—but as a designer of illustrations; and as such his *Man-gwa* is doubtless his greatest work. *Man-gwa* means literally “rapid sketches,” and we have fourteen portfolios of these, containing some thousands of varied subjects, printed in the simplest manner at a minimum of expense. No one can pass over the marvellous effects produced by the Japanese in wood-engraving and coloured printing. In the last number of this magazine we gave a lengthy explanation of their method of work.

It is curious that the Japanese have never taken to engraving on copper. The reason in all probability is because their only instrument for writing is the brush, charged with Indian-ink—at the same time the freest and the broadest of all writing appliances.

Hokusai had the good fortune to have his originals beautifully engraved—as facsimiles of brush-work nothing can equal a good copy of the *Man-gwa*; it seems as if they were the original drawings from the artist's hand.

The *Man-gwa* is, as it were, an encyclopædia. The Japanese, imitating the Chinese, appear to have always taken pleasure in



By Hokusai.



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repetitions, and their methodical minds delighted in classification and information set out in regular order. Thus it is that they were induced to make a species of index to Nature herself. The *Man-gwa* is neither the first or the only dictionary of this description.



By Keisai Yeisen.

Beginning in 1745, Morikuni published, in nine volumes, the *Jiki-Shiho*, an encyclopædia of the designer's art. One finds there examples of the methods of drawing flowers, birds, trees, landscapes, or groups; and there are other collections which resemble celebrated works by Japanese and Chinese artists of later date. Scenes of popular life and theatrical incidents were collected in the *Imbut-susogwa* (1722), in the *Yeihon Yamato-hiji*, besides a quantity of other volumes. According to local custom, collections such as these and the *Man-gwa* are intended for instruction, and may almost be termed school-books. They are intended to pass from hand to hand, to be useful to young people, artists, and more particularly to artisans.

It is impossible to repeat too often that the union of the arts—smaller and greater—is perfect in Japan; the study of nature is their common base. Drawing is thus the foundation of the industrial arts themselves. In the famous epoch of Genroku (1688–1704), Korin, a thoroughly impressionist artist, and making lacquer himself, gave designs for lacquer-makers. His family revived the Ceramic Art. They who engraved sword-guards were painters in their way; and such were the designers for the cotton-weavers and embroiderers—Moronobu, Goshin, Toyokuni. Hokusai himself gave models for china-manufacturers, lacquerers, and decorators of every sort.

Let us see Hokusai such as he is, when depicted by himself in a little preface which he wrote, and which is just what we can imagine of him. "Since I was six years old," says the painter, "I have been in the habit of drawing the shapes of objects. Towards my fiftieth year I published an infinity of designs; but I am not satisfied with anything I produced before my sixtieth year. It is at my seventieth year that I am more or less able to understand the forms of birds, fishes, etc."



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This preface finishes in the hope that—"at the age of a hundred and ten everything from my brush, whatever it is, may be full of life."

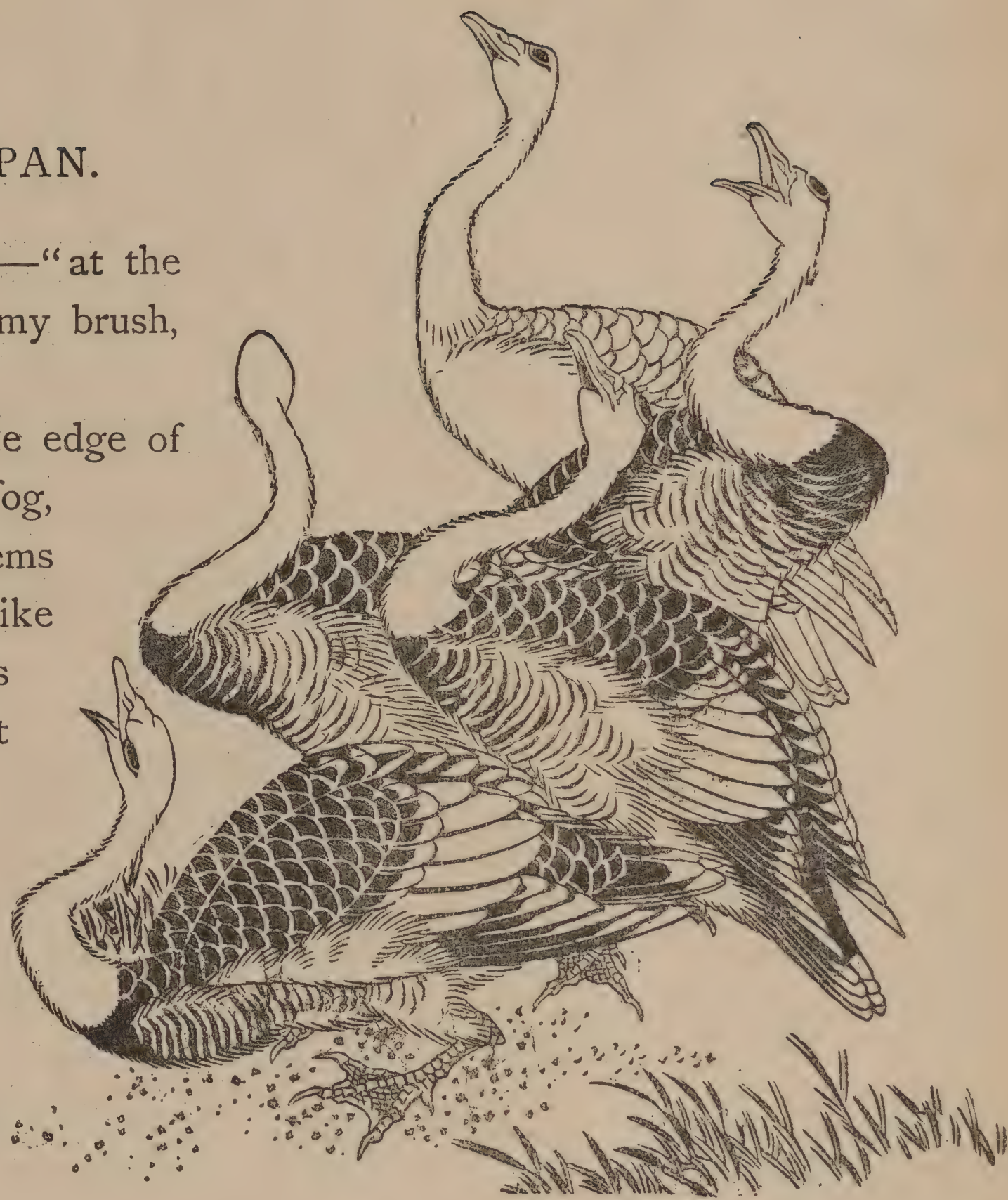
Let us picture him to ourselves at the edge of a rice-field, out for a walk, enveloped in fog, or leaning out of his window. The world seems to him a diorama. Exterior objects all strike him with an almost equal intensity; he has not the idea of things that are worth and that are not worth reproducing—he loves all things equally; and all he sees, feels, breathes, dreams, he draws on paper. He jots it down, and then has it engraved. With us this would be considered presumption. It is not so with him in Japan. When one of his portfolios was full, he made of it a volume of the *Man-gwa*, and numberless artisans took advantage of his great talent.

It is from the *Man-gwa* and similar collections that the endless variety of ornamentation on Japanese nicknacks of modern make is borrowed.

According to thoroughly trustworthy authorities, Hokusai commenced about 1810 the series of the *Man-gwa*. According to his idea, the first volume was destined for his pupils and for schools and workmen. He was not well known at this date as a painter. On the very finest paper, fastened to a block of cherry-wood, he sketched down all that passed through his mind, without ambition, without interest, without haste. It took him thirty

years* to publish the fourteen volumes of the *Man-gwa*, designing at the same time an immense quantity

* The first volume is dated 1814, and the second, third, and fourth all appeared in order after that. From the fifth onwards Hokusai was assisted by his son-in-law and one or two pupils. No. 8 dates from 1819, and Nos. 11 and 12 are after 1830. Nos. 13 and 14, interrupted by the death of the artist, were published in 1849 and 1851.



Wild Geese, taken from *The Hundred Views of Fujiyama*, by Hokusai.



Taken from *The Hundred Views of Fujiyama*, by Hokusai.

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of illustrations for the principal bookseller in Yedo. But the success of the *Man-gwa* was phenomenal.

With three tints—a black, a soft grey, and sometimes a light brick-red—three little cups placed by his side, the artist produced effects perfectly imitating nature. It seems—and on this subject we should like further knowledge—that the Japanese painter had some particular education of the eye, and that he was aided by it and a trained and carefully-instructed memory. This will explain the apparent emptiness of his outlines, the simpleness of his decorations, and the dreamy look of his drawing of solid objects. One notices the same with artists who get quite familiar with some subject and then turn their back on it in order to reproduce it better. In fact, their eye is naturally photographic, and takes, as it were, a twofold notice of objects.

Let us glance at the “rapid sketches.” Grotesque and grinning gods, scenes of every-day life, pleasant and otherwise—types of artisans, jesters, conjurors, jugglers, beggars, bathers, travellers, birds, beasts, fishes, insects, and flowers—views of mountains and seascapes, studies of trees and grasses, buildings, and landscapes; these, although only in one volume, are almost a summary of the whole series; and there are more than three hundred sketches on fifty pages. It is, in fact, an entire review of the Japanese people. The personages and the objects represented are hardly two inches

high, and are thrown carelessly from top to bottom of the pages, without ground to stand on or background to give them relief. But they are in such thoroughly natural attitudes, each having its peculiar movement and characteristics, that they seem ready to move, and one may truly say they appear full of life. In this first volume of the *Man-gwa*, too, that



By Keisai Yeisen.



Bridge, by Hiroshigé.

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deep sense of humour, which is one of the most striking traits of the Japanese and which Hokusai shared so strongly that it is shown on every page of his illustrations, is most strongly revealed.

In quickly analysing the subsequent volumes, we may mention, in No. 2, dragons, reptiles, recluses working miracles, scenes of manufacturing business, wrestling contests, physiognomies reproduced in masks, effects of snow clouds, the aurora borealis, natural curiosities, rare animals—a museum of endless variety without method or choice.

In No. 3, semi-human monsters, a terrible figure of a Japanese Gorgon, chaotic landscapes and hideous combinations of the elements evolved in a delirium unknown to us.

No. 4 appears to be one of the most interesting, with its demonology, its sketches of trees seen by night, full of snow, whipped by the wind, beaten by the rain, and with its airy landscapes, mingled with clever reproductions of life.

No. 5 contains pages full of theatrical scenes, romantic pictures, and striking views of architecture gathered together on some journey.

Somehow it seems as if they had been copied from Chinese models. This, also, is noticeable in No. 6; but this number also contains wonderful studies of movement—some handsome horses, and a whole collection of people fencing, shooting with cross-bows, and wrestling.

No. 7 contains hardly anything beside landscapes and aspects of nature. One finds in it geological curiosities and quaint effects of cloud and fog, far-stretching landscapes, and bird's-eye views of whole countries. It belongs to the sort of book called *Meisho*—a species of traveller's guide-book which teaches one all that is to be considered interesting in a country.

Every province has its *Meisho*; and Hokusai himself, when he designed the



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Fugaku Hyakukei, or *The Hundred Views of Fuji*, did not intend to do more than add a volume to this series of picturesque guides.

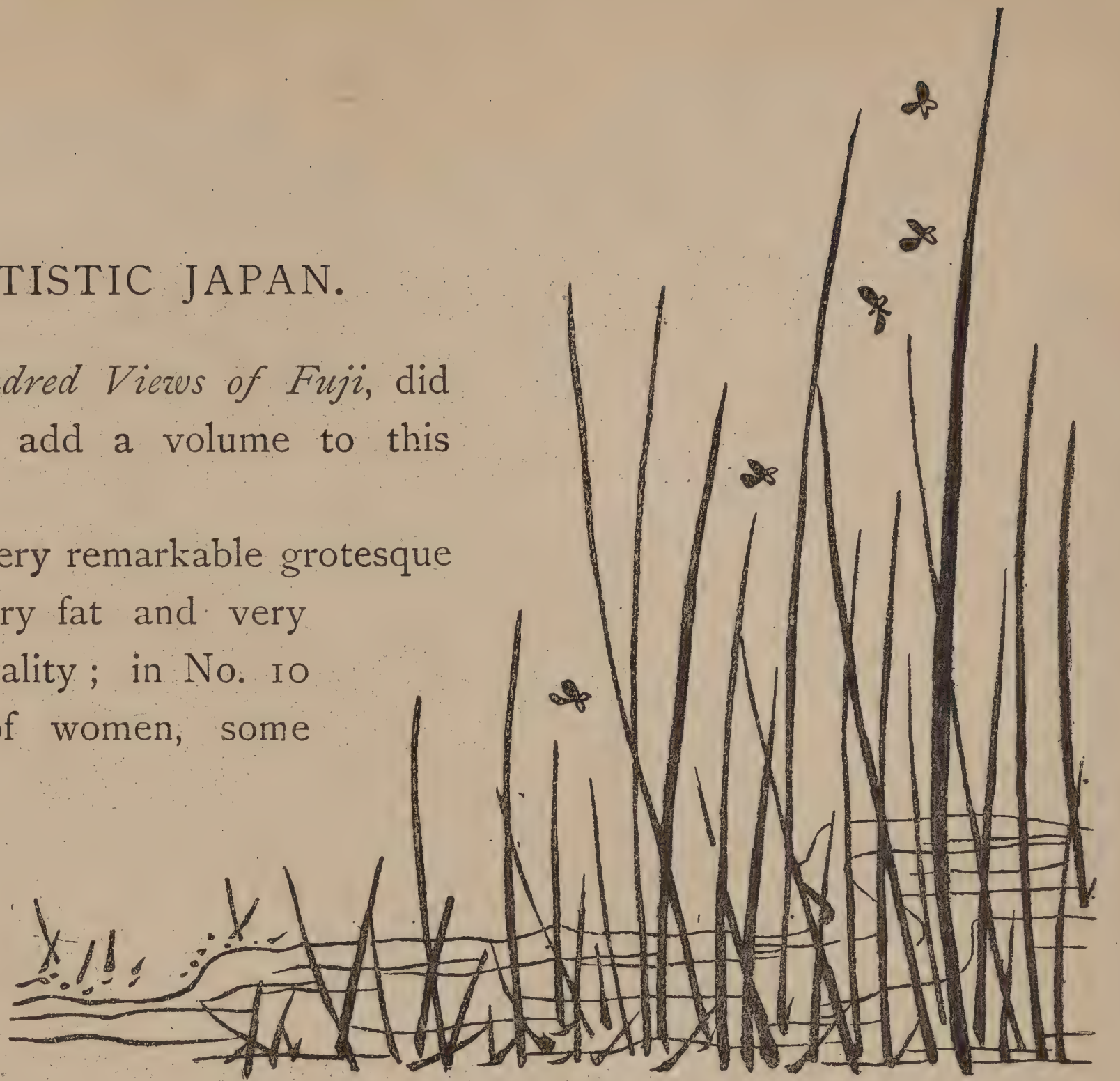
In No. 8 there are some very remarkable grotesque faces, and some studies of very fat and very thin men, which are full of vitality; in No. 10 some very graceful figures of women, some battles, and some imaginary battle-scenes. Hokusai now enlarged the size of his books, and produced some genuine works of art.

There is in No. 10 a wonderful series of prodigies shown at fairs, and little people making speeches; and besides these, mythological creatures that make one's flesh creep, and many fanciful drolleries—in fact, a surprising collection of the real and the unreal. In the 11th and 12th numbers is a capital collection of painters at work, actors, clowns, men making grimaces with hideous appearance.

Lastly, Nos. 13 and 14 are quite up to the standard of the rest; no weariness shows itself—one finds the same lovely figures and charming landscapes sketched with the same firmness, with the same freeness of hand which characterises the former numbers.

ARY RENAN.

(To be continued in No. 9.)



By Toyokuni.



Fishers, by Hokusai.

DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

Plate EF is taken from the first volume of the *Man-gwa*, by Hokusai. From the same source we have already taken other plates for this Magazine.

Hundreds of pages might be reproduced before the limit could be found of this wonderful collection, with its endless variety of subjects, of which every one is so lively and so true in its feeling that the most inexperienced eye grasps its character at once. On the page under notice—at the top, to the left—is a man stirring some compound, the odour of which seems by no means to please his neighbour. Next, we see a young woman engaged in the arrangement of her hair—always a most complicated business for a Japanese lady, and which, in the case of the working classes, is not always undertaken every day. Most elaborate preparations are made, including a good wash of the oil of camellia, and the hair is made sufficiently greasy to remain unruffled for some long time, even during the night, when the head is supported by a pillow—most inappropriately thus named, for it is in fact a little curved block of wood which is placed horizontally under the nape of the neck. Against the toilet-box, placed in front of the lady, there rests the metal mirror, of which, in the drawing, one only sees the curved top.

Next, is a peaceable personage listening in an attitude of philosophic resignation to his somewhat severe wife; while, in another familiar scene, a good-natured father, pretending to be some hideous monster, only partially succeeds in frightening a knowing little lad, who, covering his eyes behind the broad sleeves of his coat, laughs loudly. Now comes a performer on the samisen, with his face hidden by means of a mask made of a piece of paper, with holes cut for his nose and eyes. A procession of pilgrims, with the great hats they regularly wear, is seen walking away from the spectator. A juggler is catching a saké bottle and drinking-cups, and beside him a Samurai seems to equal him in dexterity, for he is doing the conjuror with the lance of his honoured Daimio.

The other portion of the page, always commencing from the left—contrary, it is true, to the usual Japanese custom—begins with a wonderfully foreshortened sketch of a child-priest, overcome by the soporific effect of the prayers that he has to learn. Of the two people who turn their back on the young neophyte, one is blind and the other paralytic. These are some of the repulsive beggars that used in former times to infest the great roads of Japan, and which one only meets nowadays in the towns of Northern China. Those who have not found themselves side by side with them in a crowd, can hardly imagine the sensation produced by the contact, or, in fact, only the sight of their emaciated forms, nearly always entirely naked.

The squatting figure is a priest begging the charity of the passer-by. He arrests attention by beating a small copper gong that he carries with him.

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This same method is resorted to by the other Benze, of a superior grade, whom we notice in the middle of the page; but this one is followed by his servant, both of them wearing round hats like mushrooms.

A more pleasing picture is that of a young female street-musician who faces them.

A shopman, clad in a straw kilt, who seems passing on with hurried footsteps, bears on his shoulder the symbolic pestle, decorated with a fringe of paper, which from time immemorial has figured in certain popular Buddhistic *fêtes*. Lower down, a jovial fellow empties the liquid contents of a pail over his head. This is an act of penitence, done to move the tutelary god Fudo, who cures maladies, protects against fire, and brings luck in commercial enterprises. The penance is practised in the winter time, when the weather is coldest, and with water almost iced. Warriors, it seems, with a similar propitiatory object, take ultra-refreshing baths before a battle. In the case before us, the man seems to be very delighted at having so treated himself; for we see him in the next sketch balancing the empty pitcher on the end of his thumb, to the inexpressible delight of a collection of children, who surround him, uttering cries and making gesticulations.

Plate GI. In No. 4 of this Magazine we gave a landscape borrowed from the series of the thirty-six views of Fujiyama by Hokusai, which was distinguished by the great richness of its colouring. The present engraving is taken from a work by the same artist, also given up to the celebrated mountain, but printed in gray ink, and having for its title, *The Hundred Views of Fujiyama*.

Nowhere more than in these charming pages is the gift of humour, caustic wit, and the power of depicting the bright side of things noticeable, and the sympathetic temperament which is able to choose the most charming aspect of a subject, and at the same time to capture its most original and freshest appearance, is here easily to be recognised.

We now find the artist at work on the curious task which he imposed on himself. It seems as if he must limit himself to going round the immense peak and studying its various configurations, planning for himself an interesting study in the changing lights and shades of the day. But we must not forget his temperament and his desire for original effect, avoiding commonplaceness as the most humiliating of all signs of weakness.

If the celebrated mountain is always the chief subject, he determines it shall be also the single point round which shall centre the varied actions of divers beings he will depict, and interest shall be added by the large collection of accessories he collects, all full of life and interest owing to his clever draughtsmanship.

Now we see the mountain beyond a stretch of transparent reeds; now it is concealed in a fog, which has the effect of bringing out upon its sides outlines of dreamy shapes intangible and fantastic; now a little cloud hangs over the crest of the mass, and our artist shows us "Fuji with his hair done," as it is called in Japan when so seen; or, again, he chooses the precise moment when the round sun seems to form, with the cone-shaped crater, "a mirror with its handle." Further on, a submerged field reflects the whole mountain reversed, which he names the "Volcano in the Water," and then Fuji is *en fête* on the seventh day of the seventh

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month Tanabata, when it is looked at through the bright-looking masts decorated with streamers, which seem to bend themselves before the majestic giant. The fresh green grass seems to clothe it with its charming covering, and wonderful is its peak when it emerges from behind flowering trees in the foreground; yet again it will appear thrown in shadow on a screen, the partition in a house, as if it were a kakémono fastened on the wall, thus showing the probable origin of these decorations. A fisherman holds high in the air his net before he drops it into the water. This is just the right framing for the wonderful outline as seen through the meshes, and nothing can be greater than the astonishment of the man drinking, when he finds, just as he puts the cup to his lips, that there is a miniature reflection of the same Fuji which shows itself again here on a tiny scale. Another page is entitled "the three whites"—the snow, the stork, and the mountain. Three framings are improvised for this picture—the wide mouth of a cavern, the arches of a bridge, and the stretched-out legs of a cask-maker, standing upon the edges of a great barrel, in order to make it circular by striking it with his hammer.

Other remarkable pages to be mentioned are "Fuji seen through a cascade," and through a spider's-web, with one or two comic ideas, such as that of "Fuji through the keyhole," and that of the comparison by some facetious traveller of the swollen appearance on the mountain side the day after an eruption with the enormous goitre in the neck from which his companion suffers.

Thus one sees that, if ever there is any occasion for the primary subject of the picture to be of little importance, this is counterbalanced by other matters of interest, and invariably by great animation. Everything lives and moves, and all the scenes are rendered with a truthfulness which is striking in the extreme. In this book we begin to understand the genius of Hokusai; and it is to it that the lover of Japanese Art returns with the greatest pleasure after having surveyed the immense quantity of the productions of this artist.

Plate IH. A night *fête* at Yedo, by Outamaro. This subject is eminently worthy of representation.

No *fête* we have ever seen in Europe can compare with the spectacle formed by the Sumida-gawa on a lovely night, when its waters are literally covered with a mass of every variety of boat, all illuminated in the most artistic taste.

From one bank to another all is gaiety. The boats touch each other, and the merry-makers speak to each other, or address each other without any former acquaintance and with no regard for caste or other exigencies. A thousand jests are exchanged; and, when the fireworks rise into the air, there are immense shouts and deafening cries of delight. On the river banks the tea-houses, glittering in the light of their great bright paper lanterns, are filled by a crowd no less lively than that on the water, and the samisen adds its classic sound to all the babel which is kept up far into the night. It is not only artists of the popular school who have tried on various occasions to reproduce this spectacle; one is almost astonished at the various repetitions, and the constancy of the public to them.

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The same feeling strikes one with regard to a great number of other subjects which one notices constantly, and which have been produced and reproduced for centuries.

This is the result of a very characteristic peculiarity of the doctrines of Japanese Art teaching, and one of those which throws a bright light on the degree of artistic education among the masses. With us, that which in all new works first takes the fancy of the public and which attracts their attention most, is some subject with a story in it; the examination of the qualities of the work are constantly only thought of as secondary details. In Japan, some pleasant subject is taken, and it is the manner in which the artist treats it which, in the eyes of the people, shows the talent. It matters not to the artist if the subject of his picture is as old as the world itself; indeed, it seems that the more it is taken from popular traditions, the more sympathetic is it to the public taste.

What is necessary, however, is that the work should be harmonious in effect, both as to its lines and its colours; and it must be shown how the subject lends itself to the particular style of work of the artist producing it in order to distinguish if it is well or ill executed. Briefly, what is wanted is, first of all, a satisfaction given to the artistic feelings of the eye; and then attention paid to the analytical eye, which affects to be knowing in all the details of execution of a work. One may make the objection that such criticism is apt to pass over the ideal qualities which give rise to elevated ideas of genius and sentiment. That is true up to a certain point in the case of popular art, whose principal object is the representation of exterior life, and which aims more particularly at brightness of decorative effect—which is the chief object of the plate before us. It is not for us, at the present moment, to trespass into the domains of another style of art, of which we shall shortly give some examples, which is less brilliant, but of a far more æsthetic feeling and full of the poetry of form. But each artistic style has its particular merits, and the popular school is at its highest standard under Utamaro.*

We have, on other occasions, drawn attention to the strong artistic feeling of this artist in his grouping of a number of personages, or plants and insects. In the case before us we can see and admire him in one of his large compositions, of which, however, the size of our publication allows us only to give a portion on a much reduced scale.

Night is the time chosen for the picture; but, far from hiding in its darkness the figures in the drawing of which he excels, the artist makes the obscurity a convenient tone on which to bring out in the foreground his ladies, who are depicted in the brightest colours. Nothing could be more unnatural, according to the laws of logic; but it would be difficult to pitch on anything more ingenious from an artistic point of view, which is the first object at the present moment. One is charmed at the first sight of them, before one has time to recognise the trick which has been played.

Plate CJ reproduces a study of the wild vine, painted in water-colour by an unknown artist. We have chosen it on account of its extreme fineness of tone and execution, the singular absence of detail in the work, and the great simplicity of the design.

* We have explained, in an earlier number, the chief points of this art of what we call the "popular school," which is but a poor translation of the word "Ukiyô."

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Thoroughly understanding his subject, the brush of the artist has been directed over the paper with a touch as delicate as it was certain.

It is remarkable how cleverly the roundness of the stalk is represented, with its bends, and how gracefully and naturally the stems are joined to the chief stalk. Observe the truth of their curves, which are always varied, and the suppleness of the thin leaves waving lightly in the air. It is this unconventionality and freedom from stiffness and dryness, so noticeable in the original of our plate, which are the essential points necessary in reproducing the charm of subjects from nature.

Plates CC and EJ form part of our series of decorative designs. Plate CC shows us a pattern of waves, another formed by repetitions of the sacred gem, and a third devised of girdle-boxes on a ground sprinkled over with cherry flowers. Plate EJ gives an example of the possibility of making a decorative design from the most commonplace materials, the one we illustrate being simply the combination of spiders'-webs.

Plate HA. Four sword-guards. That formed of beans is in cut iron, one of those numerous productions which bear no artist's signature, but which at the same time may be taken as models of good taste, invention, and perfection of workmanship. In this case there is no added ornament of encrusted metals, but the iron itself is sufficient; and here, as in many other cases, it is in the highest style of finished work. The number of sword-guards of every variety of style that have been manufactured for the last four or five hundred years must have been very large. Every imaginable device has been made use of: plants, animals, household articles, religious and legendary subjects, familiar scenes, and landscapes—in fact, the whole world in epitome, as the Japanese sees it day by day. Nothing that an artistic mind can think of has been left unappropriated, or has not been conventionalised, turned and twisted in such a clever manner as to be possible of reproduction in the narrow space of a sword-guard.

The guard, with two storks in full flight (again in plain, unadorned iron), belongs to the same date as the first. It is signed by Kinai, an iron-worker of the eighteenth century.

Quite in a different style is the next, with the form of a toad cut through it, bearing the signature, Takahashi Toshikiyo, and which was made in the last years of the existence of old Japan,* when the refinement and beauty of art-work was at its greatest height.

The border of this piece is the only part in iron, and from working and polishing it has lost its usual appearance.

As smooth to the eye as it is to feel, it cannot rust, and it presents an almost silky appearance. The body of the guard is in shibuichi, and into it the toad is cut, its outline being of shakudo, and its eye added in gold.

* We only consider as modern those objects which have been made since the opening up of Japan to foreign nations—that is to say, since 1868.

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The animal is in the inspired attitude of a poet—a comic idea which is carried over on to the reverse of the guard in a most clever way. The toad is there shown brandishing a golden brush, while at his feet there is unrolled a sheet of paper on which he has just written a well-known poem (composed, in reality, by Bashio, a seventeenth-century poet, when he was on the banks of a fish-pond where the croaking race was disporting itself). On the side of the guard turned towards us is represented, to the right of the animal, a book, and to the left the stone on which is rubbed the Chinese ink that is used for writing.

The guard with a fish is seventeenth-century work. The vertical lines engraved on the lightly-embossed plate represent a cascade; and the association of the two ideas calls to mind the popular picture of a carp jumping up a waterfall—which is intended as a symbol of great energy and courage, and as a compliment paid to the warrior whose sword this guard will encircle.

The metal is bronze, of a white patina, the fish is in gold, with eyes encrusted with silver.

Plate BC, a Ni-ô mask, in red lacquered wood. The Ni-ô—literally, “two kings”—are two colossal statues, which are placed before Buddhist temples, on either side of the entrance-door, and which are supposed to act as guardians of the place. The expression of their figures, terribly menacing, is according to traditions dating from the seventh century, when Buddhism was introduced into Japan. The first sculptor gave them this appearance, and it is the same type which from generation to generation has been handed down with but small alteration. Originally, one of the two figures was supposed to represent the god Brahma (it must not be forgotten that the divinities of the Brahma worship were added to the Buddhist Pantheon), while the other, the subject of our plate, is Indra. This mask, which shows traces, unfortunately, of its great antiquity, was used in the semi-religious plays which were originated at a later date under the name of the Nô dances. It plainly shows the energy and strength which characterise ancient Asiatic sculpture, and gives the highest idea of this little-known branch of art.

Plate ID. It is strength which imparts the chief merit to the specimen before us—a saké bottle made at Séto, in the province of Owari, where the earliest Japanese pottery was manufactured. There is strength in the composition of the paste, in the lines of the shape, and in the rich colour of the enamel. It is recognised at once that we are looking at a work at least three hundred years old, because it is according to the strength that one can calculate the age with almost perfect certainty. Our subject has no other decoration beyond the brightness of the lustre of its enamel, which is allowed to run freely over the sides. If decoration, added by a clever hand, gives the beauty which, according to the very general idea, is the chief object to be attained in pottery, ornamentation based on richness of tones of enamel produced in the firing arouses none the less admiration from an artistic eye. The Japanese have so thoroughly appreciated this fact that their greatest potters, even after having lent themselves to the imitation of painters' work by the application of vitrifiable colours

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in all sorts of designs, have always been attracted back again towards the ancient manner of strength and simplicity shown in the work of early masters. From the colourists' point of view, the superiority, in the present case, is undeniable; and when one takes in one's hands one of these brilliant pieces with, imposed upon it, layers of rich enamel, highly polished and of the finest quality, when one feels the velvety surface, the sense of touch is as delightful as the vision.

We have specimens from all the manufactories of Japan of these pieces of agate, jasper, and variegated ware, and it is only the Satsuma factory, celebrated for its exquisite products, with its delicate crackling so fine as to be like jewellery, which has not reproduced specimens of the ancient traditional decoration in coloured enamels.

Contents of Number 8.

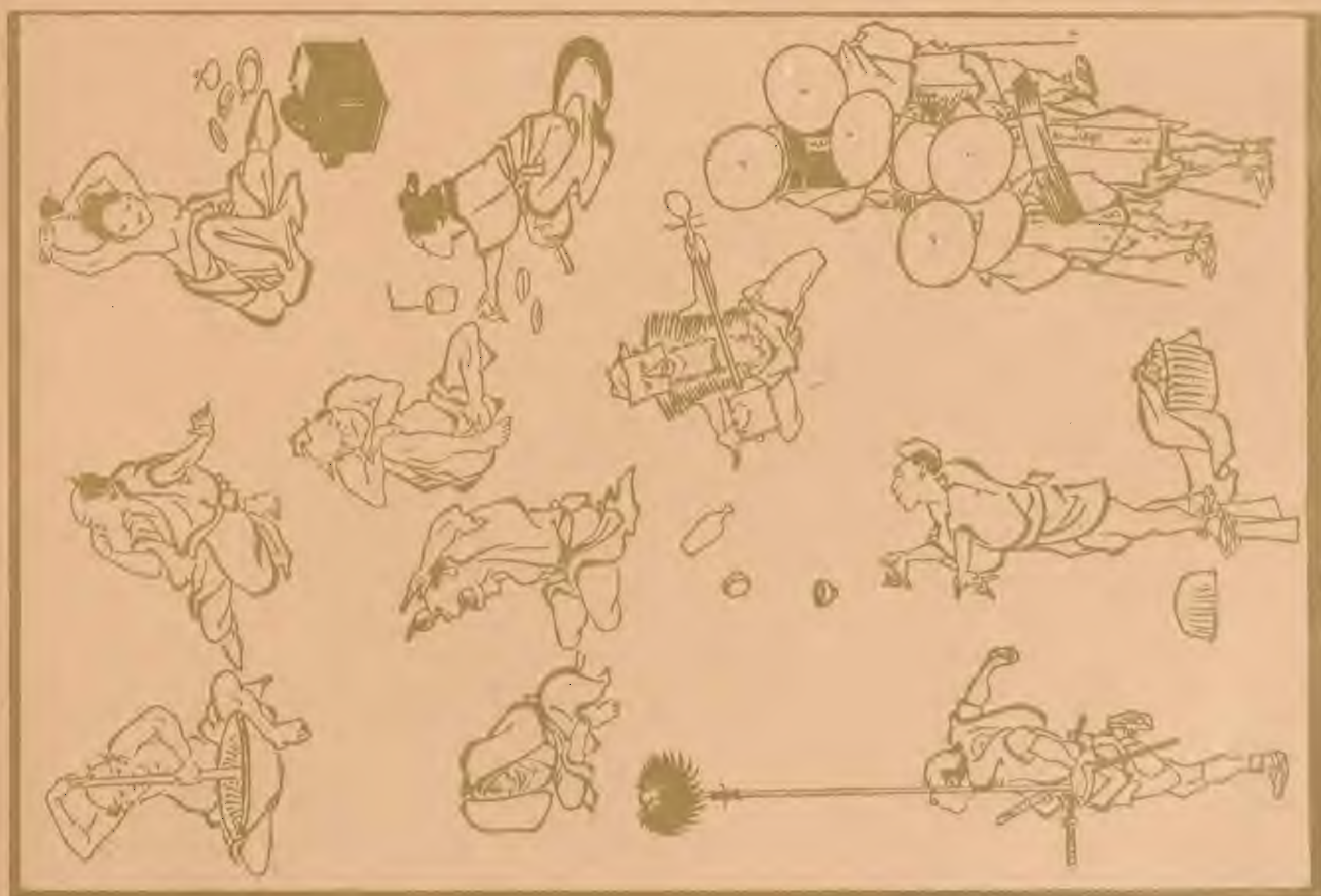
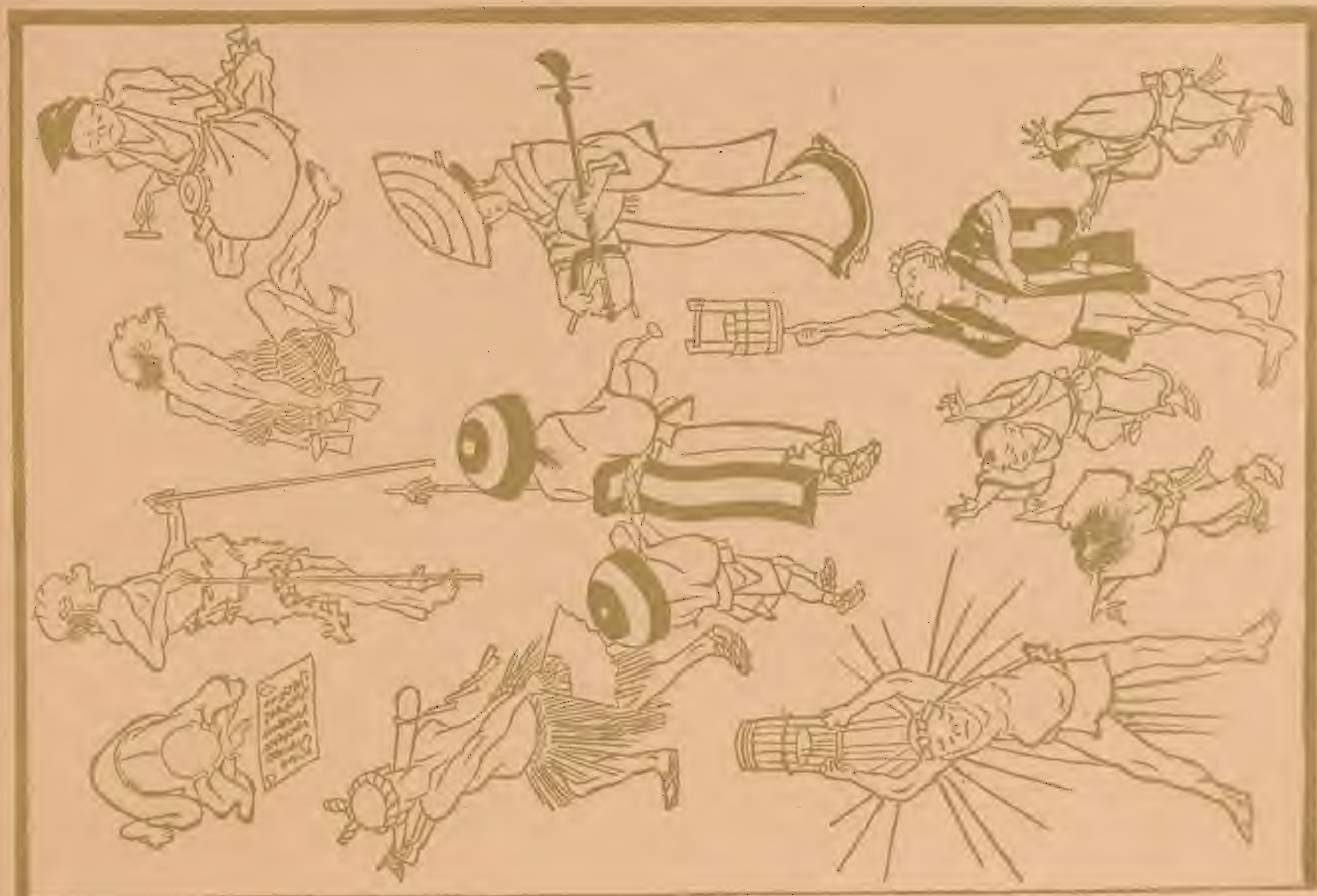
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SEPARATE PLATES.

- ID. Séto ware—Saké Bottle.
- EF. Two Pages from the "Man-gwa." By Hokusai.
- IH. Double Plate.—Night Fête. By Utamarō.
- CC. Three Industrial Designs.
- GI. View of Fuji-yama. By Hokusai.
- HA. Four Sword-guards.
- EJ. Decorative Design.
- CJ. Study of Wild Vine.
- BC. Buddhist Mask.

ID







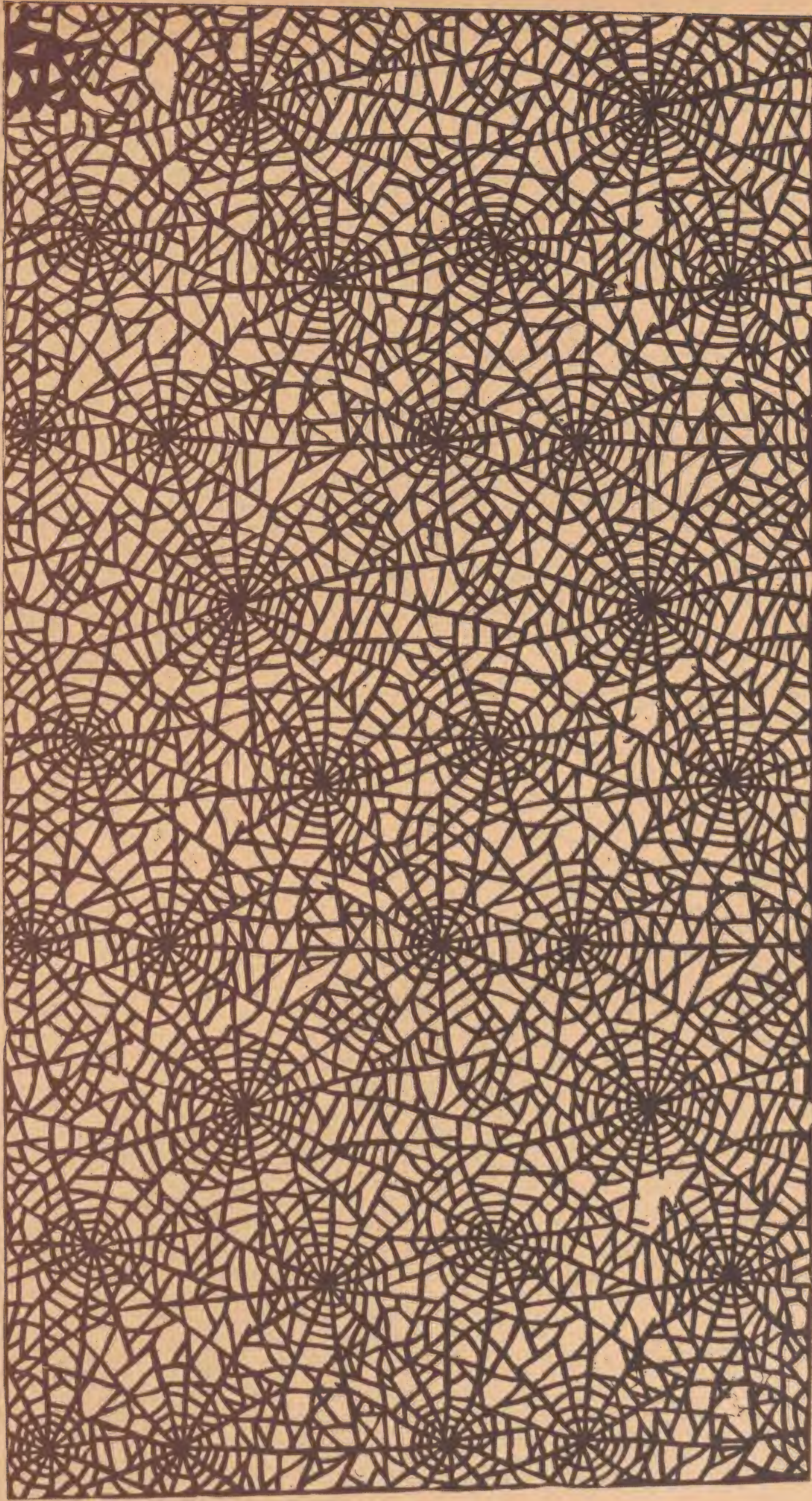




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HOKUSAI'S "MAN-GWA."

(Concluded.)

Alas, our enumeration of the contents of the *Man-gwa* must be but dry and much abridged! The *Man-gwa* is a whole world. One asks what Hokusai can possibly have forgotten. There are no repetitions, no omissions, and the volumes seem of a perfect equality.

How plainly it shows that, throughout, Hokusai had the intention of being useful! He devotes several pages to studying the draughtmanship of rocks; elsewhere he interests himself in the eddies in water, in the manner that leaves are connected with stalks, and in the veins of these leaves. He designs European firearms, carronades, and pistols; he consigns to his sketch-book studies of the effects of ice, mysterious grottoes, tidal waves. He struggles with the rapidity of nature, in portraying geysers, a cyclone, clouds,



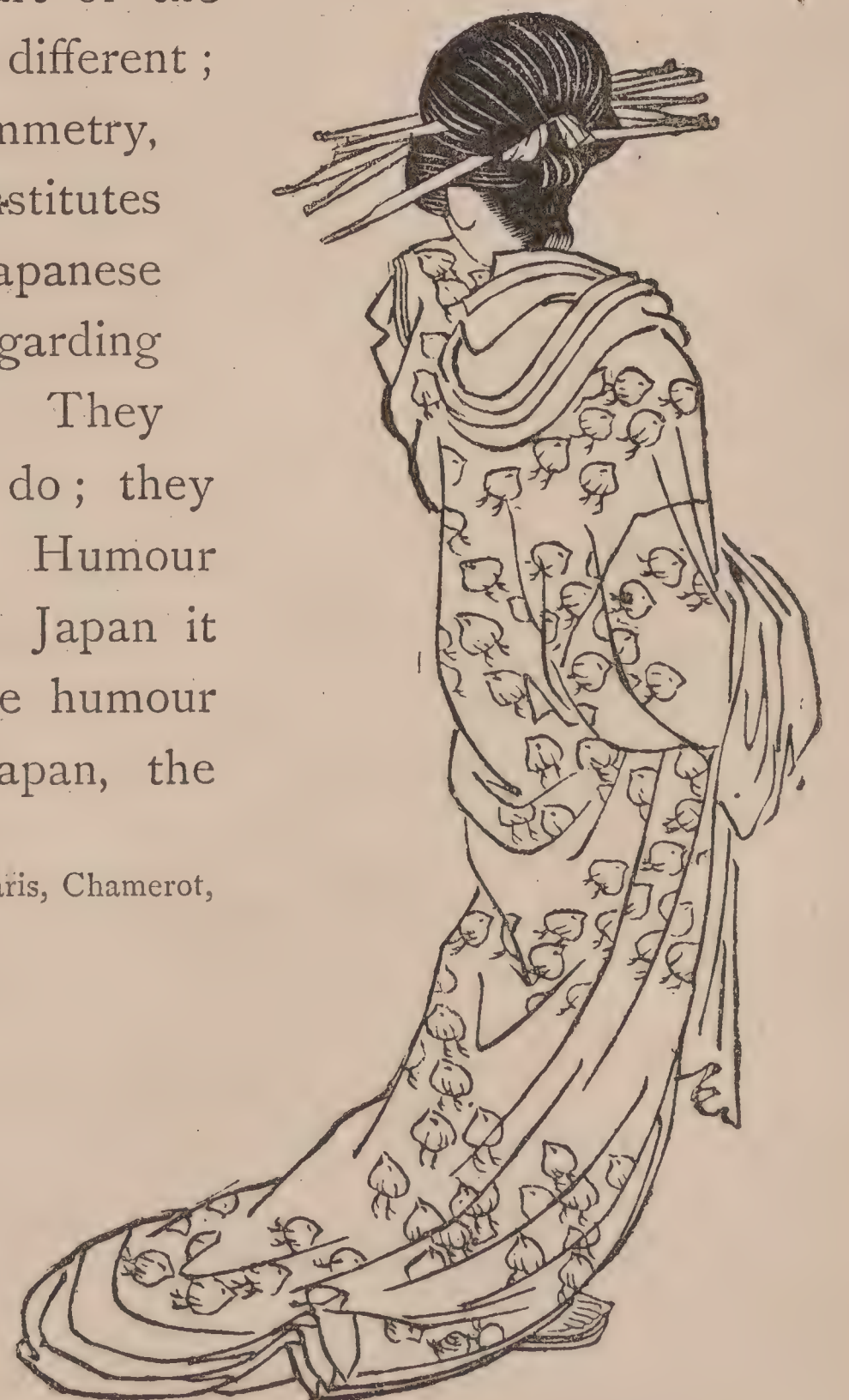
Woodman and Child,
by Hokusai.

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flames, and even lightning. One sees how he loved movement, he who determined to draw life from beginning to end. To represent motion was his great ambition. It is not correctness, effect, harmony, but movement itself which he so desperately pursues, sacrificing all to attain this object. This in reality is the chief characteristic of the work of Hokusai—this it is that strikes us most, and—let us confess it at once—it is this that puts us Westerns out of countenance. Our art is entirely opposed to this. It is constructed on the absence of movement, on a sort of perpetual retouching from nature. Movement seems to us a burden upon truth—we mistrust it as an excess, a danger.*

Movement! It is everywhere in Japanese Art—in architecture, in sculpture, in drawing. Only the Great Buddha is quiescent, and he is so eternally; but at his feet life multiplies itself, and works in immoderate haste. A swarm of pigmies moves round him—one might say the same of a mad flight of insects dancing in a ray of sunlight round a lotus bloom. Japanese artists delight in liveliness. Stiffness, heaviness, straight lines, logical and carefully set rules are their aversion. They throw themselves recklessly into amusement, only to stop when destitute of breath. Their means of expression, simplified as much as possible, lend themselves admirably to rendering hurried movements and spontaneity of action: as they are minute observers, so they reproduce actions that we take no cognizance of.

There is nothing in common between the art of the extreme East and ours. The primary matter is different; curved lines abound, and, above all, perfect symmetry, which is a powerful decorative medium, and constitutes life, movement, freshness, and naturalness. The Japanese paint the physical part of the universe without regarding the fact that they are dealing with the moral part. They do not portray joy, sorrow, love, faith, as we do; they paint strife, excitement, tragic and comic grimaces. Humour is with us reserved for the lower styles of art; in Japan it is one of the elements of the highest art, because humour is produced by movement. The heroes of Japan, the



* I have explained my meaning on these questions in *L'Art Japonais*, Paris, Chamerot, 1884.



Bucket of a Well, by Hokusai.

ARTISTIC JAPAN.

personages of romance, like the gods of the Japanese Pantheon, have huge shapes, distorted faces, and highly-strung nerves—all their animal machine participates in action. It is evident that there are two men in the author of the *Man-gwa*—the naturalistic and the idealistic. One must not be startled by this latter term. Hokusai is not only a lover of visible nature; he is a dreamer also, an imaginative painter.

One is inclined, on superficially knowing the art of the East, to consider the great Oriental races as no more than industrious swarms of bees—and with but limited intelligence; a common instinct, we think, animates every individual, but there is nothing out of the usual. The artists in those regions must produce their works, as bees make honey, by some unknown means. Nevertheless, when a personal wish is felt there, it is the shadow of a thought. The arts of the East are naturalistic, and, above all, decorative, yet in certain cases they play an imaginative part. In the *Man-gwa* these are side by side with specimens of realistic work, scenes of imagination. The imaginative part has two sources:—

1. The ancient religious legends. There exists in the Buddhist religion—so full of serenity and beauty—an unlimited series of demon gods, a Pantheon haunted by infinite devilry.

2. The artificial want general in all races, but greatly developed in the Asiatic, to equal Nature in her productions, not being able to equal her in her forces. Such, it seems, is the origin of caricature, which is an idealistic manifestation of art. By a great psychological effort, the Asiatics have created the hideous by studying the laws of the beautiful. They have dreamt of the monster, and have created him also; they have delighted in their work as a sort of defiance to nature; they have taken pride in giving the life of artistic work—to that which never existed, to fantastic animal forms, and to human shapes convulsed by unnatural passions.



Edge of a Well, by Hokusai.

ARTISTIC JAPAN.

Hokusai produced dreams, visions, nightmares. These visions have no connection with opium. Here and there we meet such strange pictures in the *Man-gwa*, that we feel inclined to attribute them to the reminiscences of a confused imagination, if we did not know the temperate habits of the Japanese. All that drunkenness reveals to tormented brains—all the forms which smoke can take for a devotee easily worked upon and already affected by the poison—all the exaggerations of the natural—all the “artificial paradises” of which Quincey, Poe, and Beaudelaire have instituted themselves trustees—unfold themselves in mad flights full of grace or utterly terrible. Is it not remarkable to find in the work of an artist of the extreme East the realisation of those dreams and fancies which the most advanced schools of literature in England and France have believed to be only encountered by them alone? Who, we ask, is the artist who has made a farther voyage

into the unreal world—we were going to say the *suggested* world?

However, Hokusai should remain for us that which he is beyond all—a reporter of nature. When one is contented with a simple outline, without interior modelling, without light and shade, without the artifices of

modelling, when one reduces, like the Japanese, one's means to the very lowest, it is a double triumph, when the strokes must speak for themselves: and it is in this magic that Hokusai is the master. Ingres used to say that one must be able to “draw with a nail;” but he knew not the secret of varying, of enriching or diminishing the strokes. The Japanese's brush has also the full strokes and the thin which have their meaning, and it is often a more manageable instrument than the pencil. Truly, it paints



Convoy of Travellers in the

Gable end, on which is seated a Bird.

ARTISTIC JAPAN.

without colour, it accentuates, it caresses, it bullies, it glides, it runs, it gallops. It is one of the wonders of our time, almost of the past year or two, that we have given evidence of an eclecticism which enables us to grapple with the arts of a distant and strange country. We are very susceptible in the matter of art, and at the same time somewhat conservative (we have, in some ways, good reason for being so); but here is an absolutely new world, which shows us some of its concealed treasures. When Europe knows them well, and appreciates them better, the verdict will go "Aye" or "No" has too high an estimate been placed upon them? The *Man-gwa* is addressed beyond all to the hardworking artisans who maintain our industries. Why do they leave the country, the streams, the fields, the sea? Why do they not surround themselves with models from nature, brightly coloured and lively? Why do they not add seaweed, butterflies, a branch of clematis to their limited designs? If they loved their models as the author of the *Man-gwa* loved his, they would pass from the rank of artisans to that of artists.

This is what Hokusai taught, in his way, to his compatriots, and it is that he preaches to us now, regardless of time and distance. There is a great difference between the soul of the European and the Asiatic—it is an abyss deeper than the Pacific. But some spirits cross the ocean like birds and the pollen of plants carried on the wings of the wind. The



Cock, by Shumboku.



of Fuji-yama, by Hokusai.

Japanese plant—if I may continue the simile—is as different from the European plant as the chestnut is from the palm or the araucaria. Each one is the natural outcome of certain circumstances, and these cir-

ARTISTIC JAPAN.

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Convoy of Travellers in the snow, the foot of Fuji-yama, by Hokusai.

ARTISTIC JAPAN.

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Cock, by Shumboku.

ARTISTIC JAPAN.

cumstances, may be counted in thousands. The Japanese artist is like a good, well-educated, honest and light-hearted child. He has a joyous faculty of loving, observing, and remarking, which ancient and worn-out races lose through the pre-occupation after the work and toil and thought of centuries. The smallest thing amuses him—things which we pass over without noticing. He opens his great intelligent eyes before the splendour of nature. At the age of eighty was not Hokusai as *receptive*—to employ an ugly modern word—as a young child? The exuberance of the old man surprises us; it ought also to touch us. Nothing has tarnished the brightness of his gaiety and his wit. The world is a great garden in which he plays in innocence, making charming posies and watching the flight of the butterflies.

Every one must at any rate gather from the *Man-gwa* the two following lessons :—

1. The union between the greater and the industrial arts should be of the closest, and be in no way humiliating to the painter.

2. Love of nature and a continuous study of the humblest objects in the world make art fruitful and render it infinite. A quarter of an hour of real emotion is worth a whole day of over-scrupulous study. Flowers are as worthy of study as men.

ARY RENAN.



Lacquer Design, by Issai.



DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

While M. Renan continues his study of Hokusai's *Man-gwa*, we continue our reproduction of some more of the endless scenes reflected in this mirror of Japanese life.

Plate DF combines two pages of the *Man-gwa*. That on the left has all the character of a leaf torn from a pocket sketch-book, on which one has jotted down the image of every living thing that had been seen during some long country walk. First we see the grasshopper, bending his long legs before he makes a leap, and next an uncommonly large earwig makes his way along with every appearance of elasticity. In a corner of the page there are grouped a spotted spider, a humble bee with short wings, and some thin-bodied insect. A silkworm extends his ringed body as he awaits his coming transformation. Lower down is a woodlouse, a chrysalis, an ant, and a salamander, and, governing all of these, the form of a long snake marks the page with its bending and graceful curve; and at the bottom a space has been left just large enough for the fat toad, in a quaintly foreshortened attitude with one foot lifted, thus showing the under part of its slimy body. While, in drawing animals, Hokusai allows himself no freedom, and never considers that he can follow nature too closely, it is quite different when he applies himself to his fellow-man. He very willingly gives full play to his lively imagination and his caustic wit. The second half of the present plate gives us some delightful examples. We are in the land of thin people, and before us is a group of wrestlers. The great comicality of the picture is in the fact that Japanese wrestlers (*Sumos*) are remarkable for their colossal size and fatness, the weight of the body being a formidable point in a wrestling contest. At the same time, it would be judging Hokusai most incorrectly if we considered that in a case of this sort also he allowed himself to dispense with strict correctness in his representation of his subject. The personages, in spite of their unnatural thinness, are anatomically perfect; the intertwining of the bodies is marvellously represented, and, under the desperate strain, the bones seem ready to break. The judge—to be recognised by the traditional fan which is used as the signal in the contest—watches attentively every movement, and seems vastly amused by so strange a spectacle. Two other wrestlers, not less emaciated than the first, await their turn outside the sanded arena, which is bounded as usual by a circle of rolled up straw.

Just as uncommon is the lower scene, in which the series of thin people is continued. Dissension has arisen between man and wife in this case, and has degenerated into a ferocious battle. Each one of the combatants has taken some household utensil; already the ground is strewn with broken earthenware, and matters might have become tragic had not two officious neighbours run and separated the couple. Their task seems no easy one between the enraged husband and wife. The confusion becomes general, and, as a result, we have most original grouping and contortions quite fantastic.

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Plate CF. Are they still more caricatures, these twenty-four types of blind people that Hokusai shows us on the curious page before us? One might be tempted to believe so at the first glance, and if one only judged superficially. M. Renan has proclaimed this truth, that those accustomed to a too discreet reserve in the study of Japanese Art have naturally a tendency to mistake for caricatures what are, with the Japanese, no more than the vigorous expression of some rapid movement. The same feeling comes when they find themselves in the presence of some strongly characteristic specimen of facial expression. Let us beware, then, of misconstruing the intention of our artist, who has evidently in the present case applied himself to a most serious study. It is to trace the effects of blindness—that infirmity so common in Japan—on the visages of different individuals according to the variations in their temperaments, their ages, or even their social status. Here there was a wide field for observation, and doubtless most tempting to an artist no less skilful in remarking the most subtle shades of character than in rendering them with wonderful truth. How striking is the variety in the types represented! And one discerns easily the attitude, the character, and the expression which the malady has given them, changing the original appearance of each person. With some the effects have been less severe, for they seem to submit comparatively calmly to the ailment; with others, in the place of gaiety, the intellect has remained no less lively, but more inclined to ill-humour, to judge from their features. Other faces show resigned sadness, stupefaction, and, almost, half-wittedness; in fact, the whole plate is a truthful picture of an interesting, but, unfortunately, far too numerous class.

Plate IB, by Hokusai, shows a pheasant in full plumage, preening his brilliant and luminous feathers. Our plate is taken from the celebrated album, *Shashin Gwafu*, of which we have already spoken (No. 7). We mentioned how rare it was to find proofs of this lovely book, of which few of the great European libraries can boast specimens. Amongst these may be cited the Royal Library at Leyden—to which Baron Siebold bequeathed his Japanese library at the very time that the *Shashin* was published—the National Library of Paris, as well as the complete and splendid private collections of Messrs. Louis Gonse and Th. Duret. Our principal collectors consider this book the most remarkable specimen of Hokusai's engraved work; and this opinion is justified by the splendid broadness with which the very varied subjects in the volume have been treated.

Plate AJC reproduces the subject of a kakémono from the brush of Teho-Sui, who belongs to the Shijo School, as did the author of another kakémono representing sparrows and bamboos, given in No. 7.

Is it necessary to again draw attention to the mastership of Japanese artists in such subjects as that before us? Do we want once more to demonstrate the variety and freshness of the different aspects under which the same bit of nature, already treated a hundred times before, presents itself from the artist's brush? Here, unlike the companion-scene that we have already given, it is not the gentle fall of snow which, in Japan, ushers in the spring; it is really terribly cold in this grey atmosphere, and it seems not by accident that the artist has chosen such an effect. It is his object to draw the sparrow, avoiding the affectations of its ordinary movements, and

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searching for some shelter against the rigour of a wintry temperature. Huddled as close together as possible, the little birds sit on the snowy branch fighting amongst themselves for the best place.

Plate BF is a portrait of an actor playing a woman's part, painted by Shunyei, of the Katsukawa School. We have before remarked that all the artists of this school adopted the prefix "Shun," from the founder, Katsakawa Shunsho. Shunyei was one of his greatest disciples, and in portraits of actors he excelled. We do not consider it speaking too strongly when we say that, among artists of every school, no one better than he could dress a personage: the folds of his garments fall in complete ease, and the representation of the material itself is marvelously realistic. We shall be able to further prove this by more representative specimens of his work than that before us. It is, of course, necessary to explain the presence of the pipe in the hands of a personage dressed as a woman. Every one knows these tiny utensils, indispensable to every Japanese of either sex—indispensable, in fact, in the midst of a life of pleasure, where manual labour is of secondary importance, constantly relighted in order to draw from them the few puffs of smoke that so small a receptacle can give, then tapped in order to empty out the remaining ashes before being replaced each time in its case, whence it is drawn again in a very short space of time. Not even the shopman in the town or the labourer in the field dispenses with this national habit, which produces a respite in work and produces perhaps some brief but pleasant dreams.

A Design for Printing on Stuffs is composed of branches of chrysanthemum of different varieties, from the commonest species, stiff and tight, to the most straggling sort, whose shrivelled and tangled petals hang so picturesquely, and form a most graceful and original motive for decoration.

Plates BI and DC are models of a like nature. The first is formed of the bold and beautiful peony, of which two fragments are sufficient to cover a whole page. Plate DC represents a pool of water furrowed by some rose-branches, over which a swarm of butterflies hovers.

In Plate HD three new forms of bronze vases are reproduced from the originals. That to the right, with the tapering shape, is decorated with palms engraved in the ancient Chinese manner, and is curiously enough only provided with one handle, which is decorated in a similar style.

The vase to the left has, on a flatter bowl, a most elegantly turned neck, whence project from chimeras' heads two graceful square handles.

The piece in the middle is in strong contrast, on account of its bold lines, which are continued up to its brim, which is of a wide circular shape. This vase has neither handles nor decoration of any sort.

Plate FE reproduces some old patterns of leather. The engraved book, whence these specimens are taken, was published in 1844 by a collector of the name of Yokeda Yoshinobu. The

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specimens were copied from authentic pieces in his collection, which are supposed to date from the tenth to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. These leathers have at all times been made for belts for armour, and one is astonished to see how advanced was the art at a very early date.

It is not less interesting to note the sort of design which was used for these kind of accessories. A certain geometrical regularity seems to preponderate, and lends itself to the representation of legendary animals, the guardian genii of the brave. Such is the dragon with the serpent's body armed with scales emerging from a pattern of waves conventionalised, and bearing on its head, furnished with powerful horns, the sacred pearl of the Buddhists. Such is also the traditional "Dog of Fô," sometimes represented in an attitude of quiet, and sometimes gambolling on a bed of peony leaves. All these are original in composition, but in a severe and bold style, thoroughly in harmony with the use to which they were destined. The author of the work mentioned goes so far as to state the names of the heroes who bore the armour from which these fragments came; and we remark among others, that the leather, decorated with chimeras and peony leaves, once belonged to the famous Minamoto Yoshi-tsuné (twelfth century).

Contents of Number 9.

HOKUSAI'S "MAN-GWA" (<i>concluded</i>), by ARY RENAN	99
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SEPARATE PLATES.

- AJC. **Kakémono—Sparrows and Bamboos, with Snow.** By Tého-sui.
- DF. **Two Pages of the "Man-gwa."** By Hokusai.
- BE. **Actor, in Female Costume.** By Shun-yei.
- HD. **Three Bronze Vases.**
- Design for Printing on Stuffs.**
- DC. **Industrial Design.**
- FE. **Fragments of Old Leather.**
- CF. **Types of Blind People.** By Hokusai.
- BI. **Industrial Design.** Peony Blossom.
- IB. **Pheasant.** By Hokusai.

ERRATUM.

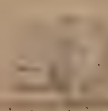
I am reminded of a mistake that I made in the first portion of the article, "Hokusai's *Man-gwa*." I was thinking of a Latin epitaph of which I could not remember exactly the first few words. I attributed it to the tomb of Virgil, while in reality it was written for that of Raphael. As a fact, it is in the Pantheon of Agrippa, in Rome, where there are engraved on the marble, behind which are the remains of Raphael, these verses, which I freely translated:—

*"Ille hic est Raphael, timuit quo sospite vinci—
Rerum magna parens, et moriente mori."*

The Text of No. X. will be by Mr. P. Burty ("The Sword").



春水樓書寫





Grav. Inscr. par B. L. L.







春英五

HD



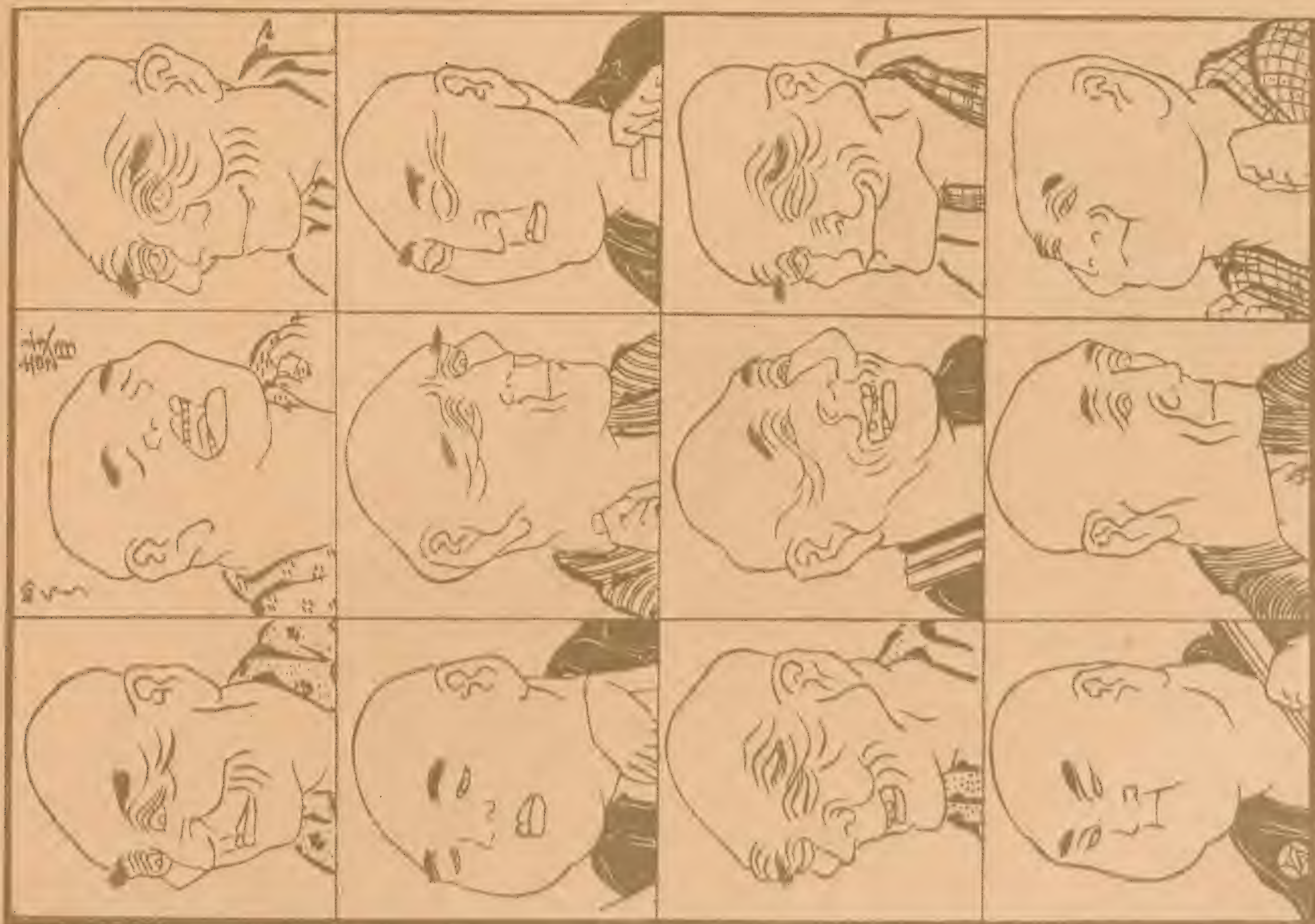


DESSIN pour l'impression sur étoffe. XIX^e siècle.

Grav. imp. par GILLOT











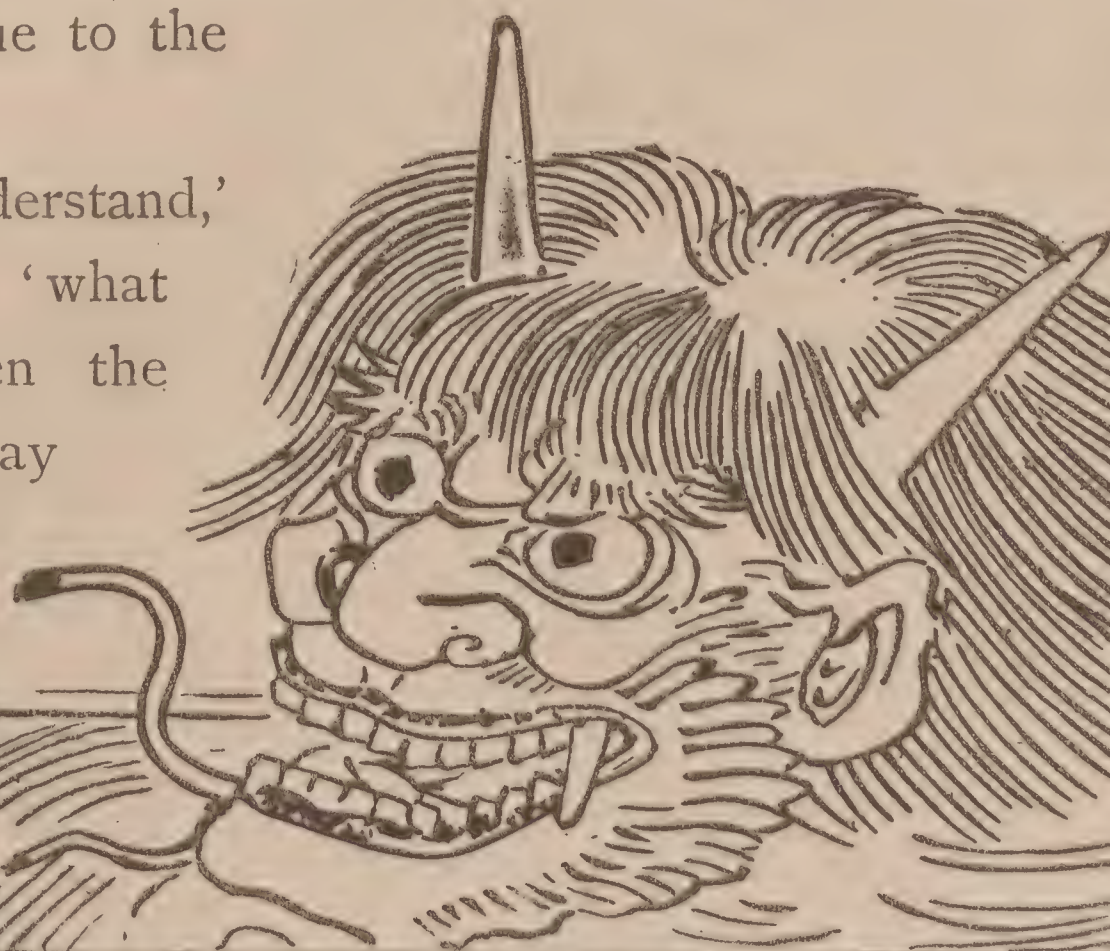
THE SWORD.

I.—THE KATANA, OR LARGE-SIZED SWORD.

In the *History of the Empire of Japan, contained in the Letters of François Caron, President of the Dutch Colony in this Country* (France), (revised, added to, and published by Melchisedech Thévenot, 1696), Mons. Caron says:—

“Once when two Japanese gentlemen met on a staircase in the Emperor’s palace, their swords clashed against each other. He who was descending was displeased because the other had struck his sword, and said some words to him. The one ascending apologised for the mishap, but at the same time added that it was, after all, two swords which had touched each other, and one was of equal value to the other.

“‘I will make you understand,’ said the quarrelsome one, ‘what is the difference between the two’; and he straightway





Shou-ki, a Chinese Hero. After Hokusai.

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proceeded to commit *harakiri*—cutting of the stomach.

“The other one, jealous of this advantage that his enemy had taken of him, hastened to serve on the table before the Emperor a dish that he had in his hands, and returned to find him who had made the quarrel dying of the wound he had inflicted on himself; having inquired of him if he still lived, he killed himself in a like manner, saying to his comrade that he would not have forestalled him had he not been at the moment occupied about the service of his king, but that he might die happy, for he had shown that his sword was of equal worth.”

The story, retold more recently in the *Forty-seven Worthies of Assano*, confirms the tradition

of ferocious susceptibility in heroic times.

In our days—or, at least, before recent legislation—the sight of arms invariably excited the Samurais.

In Satsuma—a province whose inhabitants are considered quarrelsome and ill-humoured—if a man in public, no matter for what purpose, has drawn his sword against any one, he is not allowed to return it to its scabbard without having terminated the combat by a death; according to the law, he is obliged to fight until he has killed his adversary or fallen mortally wounded himself. It is by virtue of these rigorous injunctions in times of peace that the display of every kind of weapon is prohibited. The lance and the dagger-blades must be in sheaths; the barrels of guns are carefully covered up, only to be removed in the case of an expedition into a hostile country, or when escorting a criminal to the place of execution. So it was that Sir Rutherford Alcock—who made it a custom to be accompanied at Yédo by some lancers of his own nation—was requested by the Japanese Government to hide the lance-blades of his escort, in order to avoid engendering a supposition in the minds of the inhabitants of hostile sentiments.*

A young Japanese, a page in the house of a prince before the revolution of 1868, told me that sometimes a man in shabby and stained clothes appeared at the gates of the castle, and begged for a hearing. He drew from his

* R. Lindau, 1864; *Un Voyage autour du Japon*.

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belt his two swords, placing them in the hands of the pages, and was in a short time allowed entrance. The younger people smiled at his strange appearance, and then hastened to examine his swords, which were placed upon a rack of lacquer decorated with armorial bearings. When the man retired, he received back his swords, which were presented to him with the greatest respect. Their exquisite quality bore witness to the fact that they alone remained as relics of the former exalted position of their master, the solitary witnesses of his fortune, spent often under a feigned ancestral name.

A visitor of this sort could never have been an impostor. Stories are indeed told of swords belonging to the nobles having been dishonestly acquired, but they had invariably the effect of bringing ill-luck, and, besides, were dangerous to possess, for they had a vindictive spirit in them.

It was in the endless and bloody feudal wars from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries, between the Taira and the Minamoto families, that the worship of arms came into Japan. The metal-workers in these times forged armour, and suspended from strings attached to it pieces of paper as charms against evil spirits, and they caused their finer works to be blessed by the priests of Bishammon. The god Inari, who lives in the fir woods, and whose image for this reason is often accompanied by that of a fox, on some occasions came to help the forger in the making of his finest swords.

These had names of their own, and were endued with magical powers. As an example of their names, "the little raven" may be taken. One day a prince was pursued by his enemies; they had set fire to the grass on a hill on which he had taken refuge, and he was surrounded by a circle of flames; but his magic sword sprang from its scabbard, mowed down the dry grass, and prevented the fire reaching him.

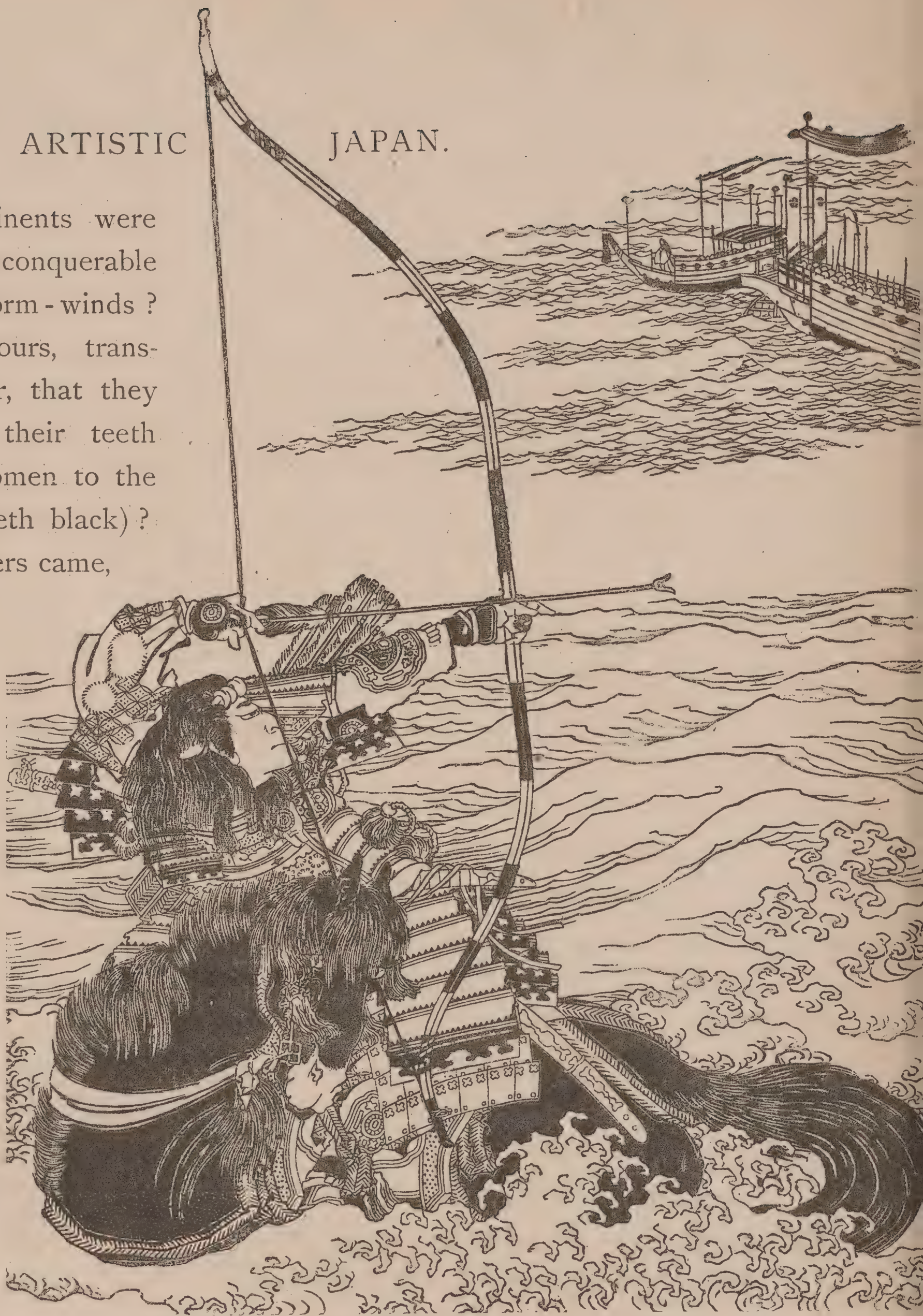
But let us leave the enchanted kingdom of legends to inquire whence and by what ancient and mysterious methods arms reached the Islands of Nippon. What were the tribes that first of all landed



there? From what continents were they brought by the unconquerable currents and the storm-winds? Whence come the rumours, transmitted from mouth to ear, that they were dark-skinned, with their teeth stained black (married women to the present day stain their teeth black)?

Later on other strangers came, and the first-comers were driven up into the mountains of Oho-ye-yama. They then became demons and eaters of women, and were armed with great polished wooden clubs.* The Stone Age, as it is usually termed, is shown by numerous examples. In the second century before the Christian era, according to the Chinese historian Ma-tuan-lin, who published his *Profound Researches in Ancient Monuments* in the thirteenth century,†

“the Japanese had only lances and bows of wood, with bamboo arrows, which had sometimes bone tips.” Seibold, in his admirable study on Japan, both ancient and modern, reproduces a fine suit of prehistoric armour. I purchased in London an arm for throwing, or hand-to-hand fighting, in green stone—such as a Japanese saw in the hands of Koreans in the quite recent war with that country; an axe, found while excavating for the railway, in green serpentine, of the most choice colour, and of a fine polish, and



Nasuno-Yoiti: an episode of the Wars of the Taira. After Hokusai.

* *The Story of the Demon Shiuten Dôji*; by F. V. Dickins. Trübner, London.

† The *Uen-hien-tong Kao* was the subject of a paper read in 1871 at the Academy of Inscriptions, Paris, and translated in two volumes which were published by M. Turretini of Geneva, in the *Atsumé-gusa*.

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with the perfect outline of Greek work, and with modifications at the angles which make it an object of art; and, lastly, some beautiful little arrow-heads and fragments of knives, which are curved, and remind one of the flexibility of a sword.

At the commencement of the seventh century of the Christian era, Ma-tuan-lin states, on the authority of an ambassador sent to China from Japan, that "they have swords, lances, and axes as arms."

In this long interval, extending perhaps over a thousand years, who had taught the Japanese to work in iron? For we know from the annals of the Tairas that they had for a long period imported their iron from foreign countries. At this time the Indian apostles, who spread the gospel of the Sâkyamuni, were crossing the seas. Dharma, for instance, is often represented sailing on a branch of the tea-plant, or on a sword-blade floating on the waves. Coincidentally with the arrival of the Buddhist religion through India, China, and Corea, a great advance occurred in the manufacture of arms. Among temple treasures are shown ancient sword-blades, misshapen and oxydised with age—such as are brandished by the four guardians of heaven who watch by the temples and oversee the evil genii of the cardinal points.

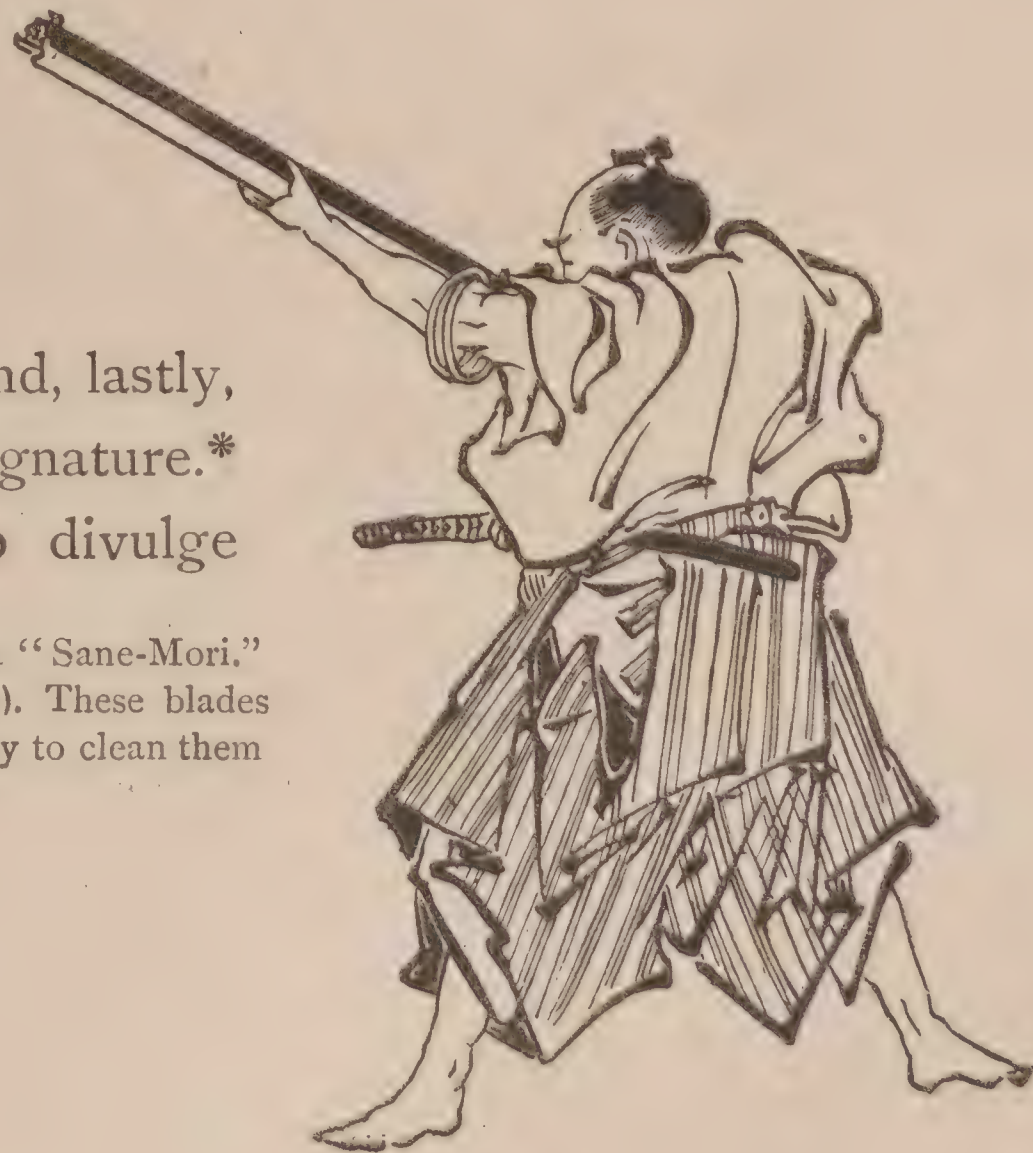
The real Japanese arm though is the katana—a sword slightly curved, with one edge only, and sufficiently solid for use with both hands.

It is probable that before the discovery of the iron mines found in the eighth century, Japan got iron already worked from Corea—abundant in minerals and more advanced in civilisation.

We must here remark upon an unusual circumstance in the history of the industrial arts, and that is, that the names of the makers who invented or carried to perfection the forging and tempering of sword-blades are known—for instance, Masa-nobu and Sané-nori in the tenth century. The quality of their work is of the finest, and of an unequalled resistance. The *Kamis*—or spirits of their ancestors—came to their aid when they hammered the pieces made of old nails, put them in the furnace, annealed and tempered them, and, lastly, they sharpened and polished them, and added the signature.*

The Japanese were, originally, careful not to divulge

* M. Montefiore possesses in his wonderful collection of arms a blade signed "Sane-Mori." The mounting, as also that of the little sword, is signed "Itijo-Gotô" (about 1840). These blades are usually provided with a groove for the escape of the blood. It was necessary to clean them at once after an action, as blood causes indelible stains if not at once removed.



ARTISTIC JAPAN.

their secrets to other nations. Kaempfer tells (A.D. 1755) how, in the year 1676, a Daikwan or administrator of the imperial estate of Nagasaki, named Sié-Tsugu-Feso, was convicted for having collected together some swords which he proposed to secretly send into Corea. This was enough to cause his death and that of his whole family, which was a large one. He was condemned to crucifixion, and his house was razed to the ground. The Jesuits sent some swords to Louis XIV., which were preserved for a long time in the Petit-Bourbon. Rembrandt had some which the captain of a Dutch ship had given him in exchange.

The Dutch, in their first reports addressed to the directors of the East India Company, drew attention to the immense prices at which the Japanese princes valued their arms. "They have" (*Memorable Embassades*, Amsterdam, 1660) "the same madness for the jars for *tsia* (tea) and for kakémonos as they have for their swords and daggers, which are often priced at four or five thousand florins when they are the forging of some celebrated workman." With regard to the fortune of a Mikado, who died in 1631, Melchisedech Thévenot gives us the words that he uttered on his deathbed: "I have always held in great reverence these things as much as my ancestors; and you should make a rule to do so for this reason." Among other precious articles, he gave to his son a sword curved in a semi-circle with the signature "Dzouky Massamé;" another signed "Samoy;" another smaller, which bears the name "Bungo-Dyssero;" another, "Massamé." He left to his second brother a sword signed "Ozu-Massamé;" to his third brother (both princes had provinces of their own) "a sword, some pictures (kakémonos), and a little vessel for preparing *tsia* (tea) in, called mara-issiba."

At the close of the seventeenth century, the taste for luxury and adornment had degenerated to such an extent with the Samurais, that they ornamented and painted themselves like women. A certain Yodora Fatsyro, son of one of the rich merchants in Osaka, ruined himself by wanton extravagance and was exiled, and the Government confiscated his goods.



ARTISTIC JAPAN.

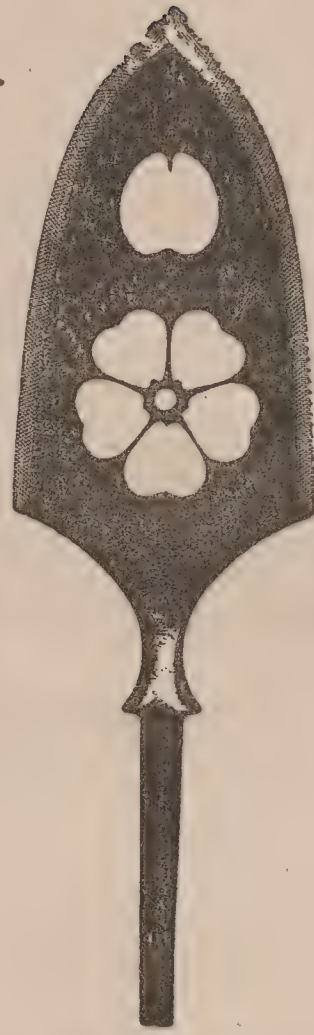
In the list of his effects there are mentioned a hundred and seventy swords of all lengths. It was the height of fashion to match the pair of swords with the dress worn. The excellence of the swords and the art displayed in their mounting were mentioned by the Jesuits in their *Letters*, which were abundantly circulated over Europe. To the reverend Fathers is due the

praise of having first admired them. They had sent to Saint-Siège an embassy, which leaving Nagasaki in 1582, arrived at Lisbon in August 1584. These neophytes, belonging to the greatest families, were the object of the greatest curiosity, and were treated magnificently. Philip II. received them at Madrid with a familiarity of which he was not lavish. He addressed them as "his cousins;" he sent them his carriages to visit the Escorial—then recently finished—showed them his treasures, his stables, and his armoury. During one of these receptions, the King, to the great surprise of the Court, stood for a whole hour asking a hundred questions, examining their silk robes, their girdles, which he called "scarves," and stopping to look at their swords. What a scene for a painter of historical subjects! The draperies for ceremonial use, with their broad folds and great designs, the King always in black, always grave, touching the rich materials, or remarking upon the brightness of some sheath inlaid with mother-of-pearl.*

Three suits of armour, which formed a part of certain presents which were sent to the King of Spain, are preserved in the Royal Armoury at Madrid; but they were much damaged by the great fire in 1885. A good idea, however, of their value and interest can be obtained from the etching by Mr. H. Guérard, in Mons. Gonse's *L'Art Japonais*. They came from the studio of the Miochins, a family noted during several centuries for their manufacture of weapons of war. Dr. Mène has some magnificent specimens of their work in his collection of armour and helmets; these will be exhibited



Yassaghi-ha
(Willow Leaf).



Yassaghi-ha
(Willow Leaf).

ARROW-HEADS.



Wata-kousi
("Tear-flesh").



Yassaghi-ha
(Willow Leaf).
ARROW-HEAD.

* The Quinet Museum contains a lacquer and gilt screen, upon which is portrayed the Jesuits and, probably, Francis Xavier disembarking at Japan.

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at the coming Exposition Universelle. In the Spanish suits the front of the breastplate is covered with divinities, dragons, monsters, and kindred subjects in high relief. The ornamentation of some of the helmets shows European influence. It is well known that Portugal, at the close of the sixteenth century, exported to Japan a quantity of pieces which the introduction of gunpowder had rendered out of date. The gauntlets and armlets, on the other hand, seem by their inlaying and damascening, to have been affected by the influence of the Persians, a race which excelled in that branch of the arts. It is known that relationship existed between the two countries through the intermediary of ambassadors, who were established in Corea before the fifteenth century. We should very much like to know to whom the Japanese are indebted for the idea, which seems to Europeans more comical than terrible, of the masks with white moustaches, prominent noses, and wrinkled cheeks. Was it China?

But to return to our subject of swords. We know from the list drawn up, when an execution was levied on his studio, that Rembrandt possessed



The Kami Inari aids Masa Muna in forging a blade. Masa Muna has put on his robes of ceremony; he has

ARTISTIC JAPAN.

Japanese arms. Probably some captain of a Dutch trader had brought them to him. Mazarin, the omniverous collector, also had some. Louis XIV. amassed some, which he placed in his "Cabinet d'Armes" at the Petit-Bourbon, and which are still to be seen in the Artillery Museum. But really, with very rare exceptions, Japanese arms never, until quite lately, found their way into Europe. Travellers only noted their existence; the Renaissance, so fond of everything which appertained to a man of war, was unaware of their existence.

Every account mentions the wondrous feats accomplished by swords when held in the hands of experts: when blades were sold, it was usual to divide a piece of coin or even a common sword before the purchaser, without notch or hurt to the weapon. These weapons had a terrible sharpness: I have myself seen a blade on which was carved an inscription that it had severed the heads of two corpses at a blow—a performance enacted in the presence of the illustrious Prince Iyéyasu.

This notwithstanding, these blades, so well whetted, so strong when



ARTISTIC JAPAN.

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The Kami Inari aids Masa Muna in forging a blade. Masa Muna has put on his robes of ceremony; he has hung ^{off} papers, and suspended strips of paper from a cord, offering votive gifts to the gods. After Hokusai.—See page 113.



After Hokusai.

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adroitly handled are brittle, and will not bend in the manner Europeans are accustomed to.

Colonel le Clerc, who has collected at the Museum of Arms a most interesting series of the war costumes of every race and age, has kindly assisted me in my experiments by sending to the Small Arms Factory at Chatellerault some of the blades which the Government received at the time of the French Exhibition of 1867 from the Prince of Satsuma. The following are some extracts from his valuable official report:—

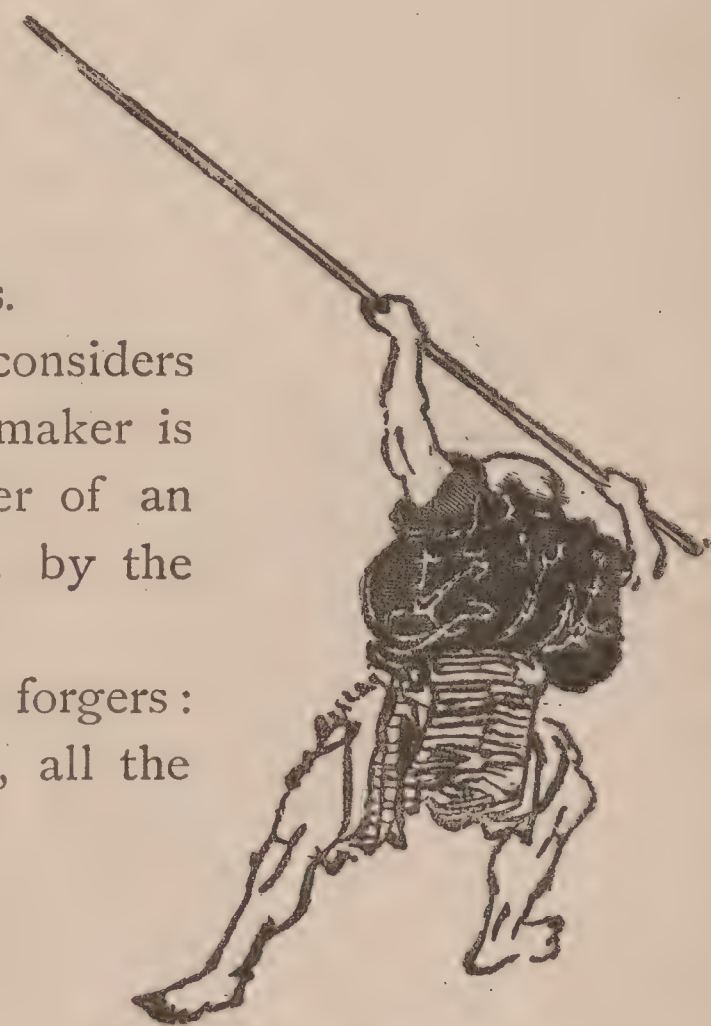
“I have submitted the blades to the examination of the master workmen and superintendents of the Small Arms Factory, who you know are most experienced in all questions of forging, tempering, and sharpening. They have brought to bear upon them such searching tests that they must furnish us with useful information as to the method of manufacture.

“The blade presents two noteworthy peculiarities: the tongue is large and strong, thus allowing the hilt, as well as the numerous mountings, to be stoutly fastened; the blade has a very thin section, both lengthways and sideways, which very much facilitates the different stages of fabrication, as to which we can award nothing but praise to Japanese artificers, for they accomplish with very rude appliances wonders which are beyond the possibilities of our very best workmen, assisted as these are with all the resources of perfected machinery.

“In order to examine the structure of the metal, a blade has been broken in three different places. It has thus been easily ascertained, by means of a magnifying glass, that the core is formed of a sheet of very wiry iron, covered on its two principal faces and edge with a coating of steel; the grain of the steel upon the faces is less fine and close than that of the edge, which circumstance may probably arise from the method of tempering. One may assume that the forger covered a mould of iron on three of its faces with a coating of steel, and that he then managed to attach the surfaces which were in contact by means of a regular and methodical hammering, which produced a kind of welding. The thicknesses of the two metals is most regular, the welding is perfect, without any appearance of cracks or indentations. This operation must present enormous difficulties to be successfully and perfectly surmounted, as they are: often our forgers could hardly believe their eyes. The raw material, too, must be of the best quality, to judge from its grain and physical properties.

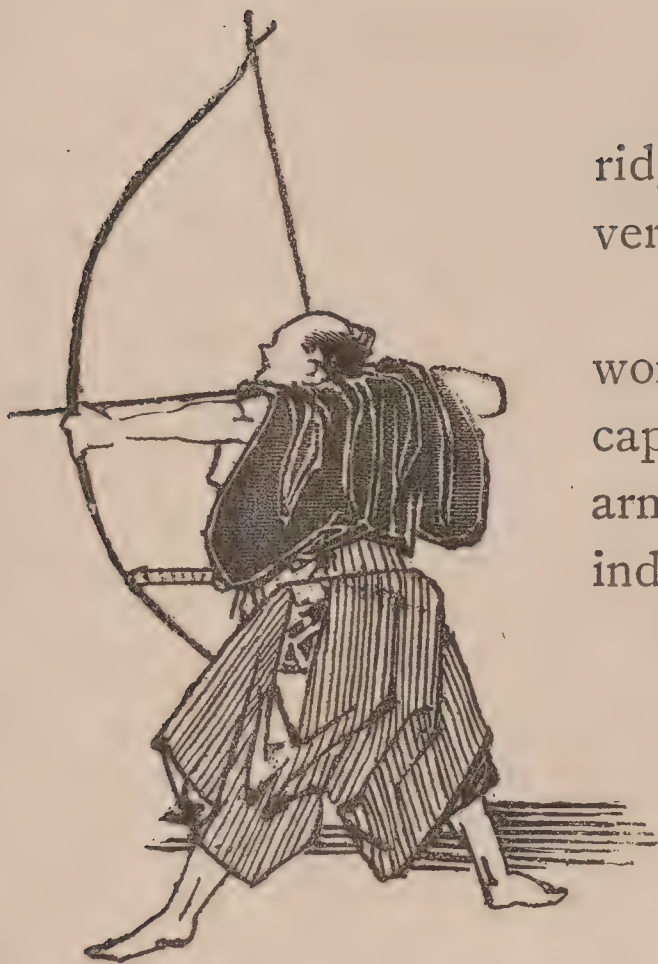
“The tempering ought not to present many difficulties, when one considers the thickness of the blade and its lack of rigidity. As it is, the maker is content with tempering the edge only, to a width of about a quarter of an inch: this is clearly visible after an examination of the grain, and by the cracks which show upon the surface when the blade is sharply bent.

“The sharpeners are even cleverer, if it were possible, than the forgers: the shape and size of the blades is kept with the greatest exactitude, all the



Lance Exercise, after Hokusai.

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Bow Exercise, after Hokusai.

ridges have a perfect regularity; the edge is wonderful, and the polish very fine.

“To sum up, the materials are excellent, and the workmen who have worked them have been real artists. Such is the opinion of our most capable experts. We can learn nothing that is profitable for our own armament from the blades which you have sent to us; but if you could induce the Japanese workmen to come and give us their assistance as forgers and sharpeners, I believe that they could instruct our master-workmen in many ways.”

Here I must stop for the present; another day I will take up the subject again as regards the small-sword. The great Iyéyasu spoke as follows concerning this noble weapon: “For a Samurai to forget to wear his sword is an unpardonable act; the sword in the girdle is the soul of the Samurai.” This aptly sums up the whole matter.

PHILIPPE BURTY.



A Sword Swallower, by Hokusai.

DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

Plate AAH is the reproduction of a kakémono by Ganku (1750-1838), who was the founder at Kyoto of a rival school to that of Shijo, established shortly before his time by Maruyama Okio in the same town. Following the example of the last-mentioned artist, Ganku professed the doctrines called "realistic," which were destined to drive out the academic method in the representation of living beings. But with this difference, that he did not aim at attributing to his own epoch the exclusive merit of this innovation. Going back in the history of Art, as far as the Chinese masters of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, he proclaimed that similar lessons might be learnt from the work of early masters. It is thence that he drew the highest of his inspirations, and it is their influence which is so evident in the celebrated pictures of tigers, which have gone so far to perpetuate the renown of Ganku. One can judge by the present kakémono of the perfection the artist was master of in rendering the strength and ferocity of the animal.

Plate AJE, by way of contrast, gives us a pleasant specimen of the Shijo School to which we have just alluded. These two pages of birds proceed directly from Okio. The bamboos and chrysanthemums slightly bend beneath the weight of the tiny creatures which have alighted on them. Nothing is more beautifully represented than the effort of the bird, fluttering its wings and endeavouring to keep its balance on the flowering branch. The plate is taken from an engraved album, of which the reproduction is in every way equal to the designs. The stroke of the brush charged with Indian-ink, which in one strong line has traced the foliage of the bamboo, is reproduced on wood with a truthfulness that deceives the eye; and, in the other drawing, the freeness of style which constitutes its chief merit is not less admirably rendered. The book is without the signature of its author; but these sketches seem to us worthy to be placed among the masterpieces in their style.

With plate ABB we find ourselves again in the midst of a lower form of Art, whence we have already borrowed specimens. This time we renew our acquaintance with one of the last artists of note known in the era of decadence, Kuniyoshi (1800-1861), originally a pupil of Toyokuni, but nevertheless largely inspired by the work of Hokusai, as the engraving before us shows, as the reproduction of one of the best compositions of the artist. It would be almost impossible to go further into the popular style. The three men in the plate, lost in the pleasures of angling, their characteristic type and familiar attitudes, which could not be seen in any other employment, the simplicity of costume—all combine to give this scene a feeling of absolute realism, and, although there is no poetry in the composi-

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tion, no one can say that the vulgarity of the subject destroys the striking impression of the picture. The line of the horizon is immensely developed and bathed in the rosy rays of a sun that is nearly set: a few white sails alone are seen in the distance on the surface of the water. A spot of land, already made dusk by the rising shadows, seems to taper off gradually, while a few boats at anchor make a striking effect on the opposite shore. Nearer to us there comes a boat, the occupants of which have carefully hidden themselves from the gaze of inquisitive strangers beneath the shade of an enormous umbrella, leaving us to guess their occupation; while quite in the foreground is a great eddy in the water round the pointed rocks on which are perched with miraculous balancing-powers our persevering anglers. All is enveloped in the limpid atmosphere of a calm spring evening. The scene represents the mouth of the Sumida-gawa, in the bay of Yedo, near a place called Tépozu.

Plate ABG, two designs taken from the *Umpitsu Sogwa*, by Tachibana Morikuni (1670–1748), a work in three volumes, published after the artist's death in 1749. The title, which may be translated as *The Book of Quick Sketches*, justifies itself by the examples we have taken from it. They represent exactly the manner of the master, who by the simple dexterity and certainty in his management of the brush, arrived at giving the desired form to everything he jotted down on paper, in simple Indian-ink outlines. Each of the rough strokes thrown here and there pell-mell upon the paper, every one of the jagged and broken lines, form a being or a thing constantly full of life—we were almost going to say of soul.

The contrast of the white space between the outlines constitutes an effect of light which represents modelling in a surprising manner. Would it be possible to imagine a more supple effect than that given by the body of this squirrel, arrived at by the ingenious use of the brush? The artist was supposed to be a wonderful calligraphist, and we can easily give credit to the notion.

Morikuni is worthy of an important place in Art. Amongst a great many works illustrated by him, he created a highly valuable series of models for artisans, by whom they have for more than a century been constantly used and applied in chasing and lacquer making.

Plate ABF is a motive of decoration for stuffs or paper of a most elegant description.

Plate AJJ is the reproduction of a small piece of a robe of brocaded silk of seventeenth century make. On a checker pattern of various colours a flight of white cranes is displayed, which break what might be monotonous in the geometrical ground. The design is of the most imposing style, the colours are harmonious, and the whole effect is that of the grandeur which characterised the lordly draperies of feudal times.

Plate ACC represents a bronze flower vase of eighteenth century workmanship, with a granulated surface of green patina. It rests on three little lobsters, which, in spite of their

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apparent fragility, give a solid substructure for the body of the vase, and form with it a well-balanced whole. It has been all made in one mould, and once more shows us the technical ability at which the Japanese had arrived in this sort of production. How natural are the little beasts which curve and bend, forming the stand of the vase, and how much more picturesque they are than the three commonplace feet which so often serve us for supports in our objects of the same nature!

Plate ABJ, a hanging vase in the shape of the pulley and the buckets of a well. It is in the pottery made at Awata, a suburb of Kyoto, and dates from the commencement of the eighteenth century. The chains of metal, necessarily shortened to carry out the reproduction, somewhat mar the graceful effect of the object. They are easily unwound from off the pulley, and so allow the little buckets, in which the flowers are placed, to have their respective positions arranged according to taste. The sort of pottery of which this piece is made was first manufactured by Ninsei, a celebrated potter who lived about 1700, and since then it has become almost customary to call all the specimens of this fabric "Ninsei." It is this sort which was formerly known in France as "*vieux truité*," on account of the minute crackling which is seen in the glaze, which is of a fawn colour more or less decided. In the decoration blue and green enamels predominate, and they are frequently enhanced by the addition of burnished gold ornaments. The first kiln at Awata owes its existence to Ninsei, as do a certain number of others established by the master-potter in different parts of the suburbs of the ancient capital. Before Ninsei, pottery decorated by means of vitrifiable enamels was unknown; it was he who first applied this decorative principle, which up to his time had been used only for the ornamentation of Japanese porcelain.

Plate ACJ is a group in porcelain. In spite of its considerable size (in the plate the reduction is to a half), it is what we may call an ornament for a cabinet—that is to say, that it has no practical use. The Japanese design a piece like this under the name of *Okimono*, literally, *object to be placed*, which, in this acceptation of the word, means an ornament. The specimen is in the porcelain of Hizen, probably manufactured towards the end of the last century in a kiln belonging to the prince of Nabeshima. What gives it its character is the soberness of the colouring and the absence of gold decoration. The subject, a very favourite one in Japan, represents some pigeons perching on tiles broken from the roof of a temple: it is round the temples that pigeons flock in hundreds. In the object represented in the plate the tiles become blue in the burning; one of the birds is pure white, while the other has delicately tinted plumage. The kilns of Nabeshima were not used for commercial purposes, and their productions were reserved for the royal palaces or the Shogun's Court.

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- ABG. **Two Sketches.** Squirrel and Crane. By Tachibana Morikuni.
- AJE. **Birds and Plants.** School of Shijo.
- ACJ. **Pigeons on Broken Tiles.** Hizen Porcelain.
- ABB. **Men Fishing.** By Kuniyoshi.
- AAH. **Tiger.** Kakémono. By Ganku. (Double Plate).
- ABF. **Industrial Design.** Butterflies and Flowers.
- AJJ. **Portion of Brocaded Silk Robe.** Seventeenth century.
- ACC. **Bronze Vase.** Eighteenth century.
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The Article for No. XI. will be "The Small Sword," by M. Philippe Burty.











魚井



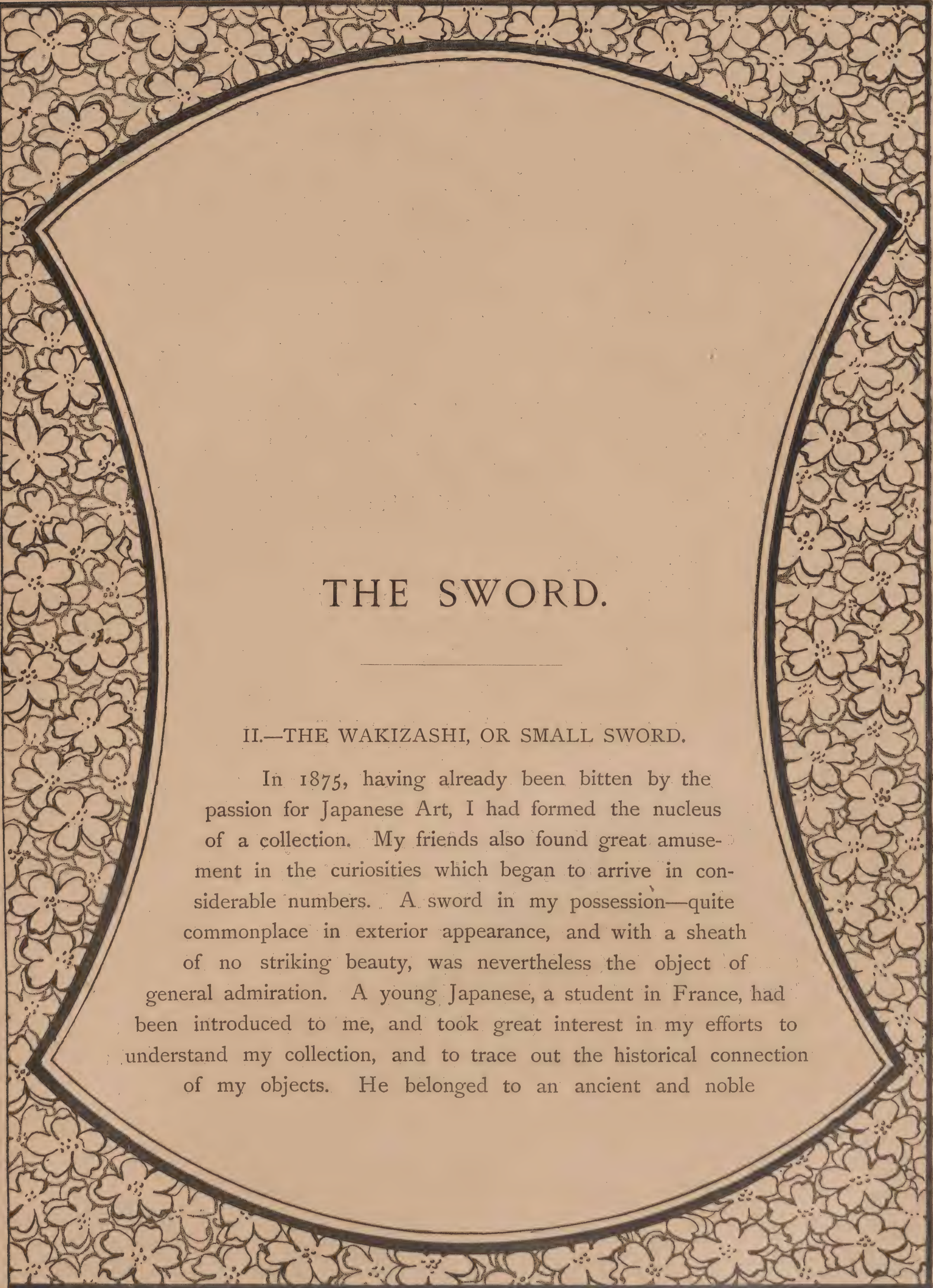




ACC



GRAV. IMP. PAR GILLOT.



THE SWORD.

II.—THE WAKIZASHI, OR SMALL SWORD.

In 1875, having already been bitten by the passion for Japanese Art, I had formed the nucleus of a collection. My friends also found great amusement in the curiosities which began to arrive in considerable numbers. A sword in my possession—quite commonplace in exterior appearance, and with a sheath of no striking beauty, was nevertheless the object of general admiration. A young Japanese, a student in France, had been introduced to me, and took great interest in my efforts to understand my collection, and to trace out the historical connection of my objects. He belonged to an ancient and noble

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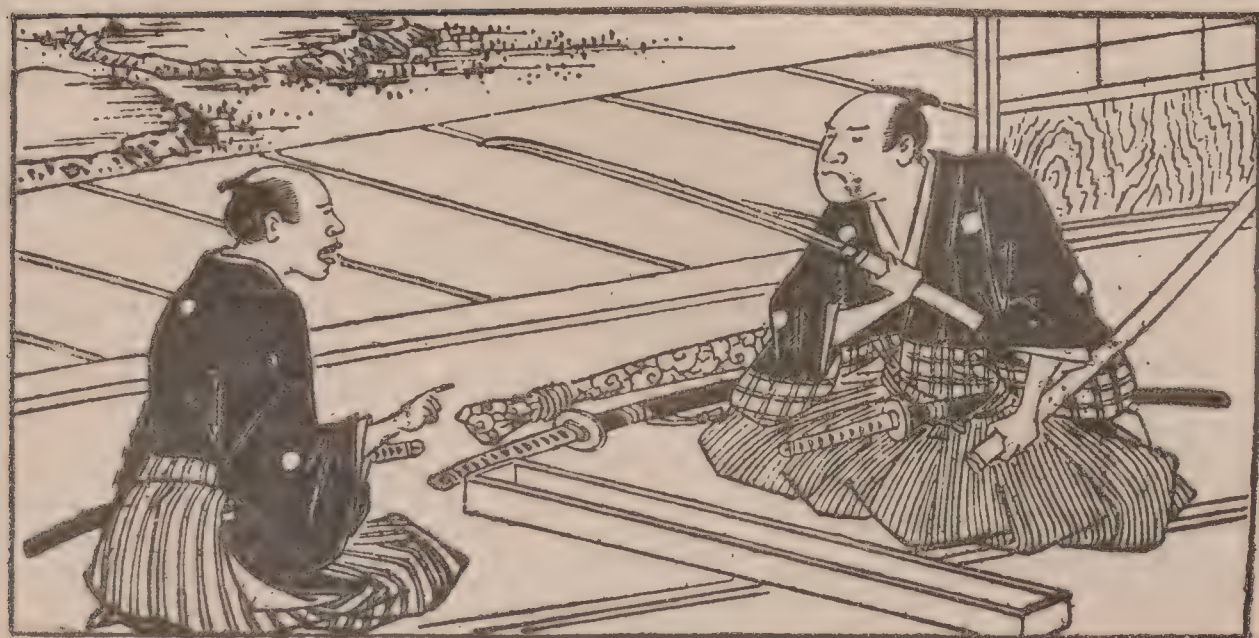
family, taking rank only next to the Mikado, but which, since the rising into power of the Tokugawas, whence came the Shoguns, had fallen in its fortunes. He was intended for the diplomatic service, and was thoroughly in favour of the European reforms which the younger generation demands. He evinced not the slightest enthusiasm for my sword. Besides, he assured me that the "attendants of the ministers carried weapons exactly similar." One day in October, when I should have expected him to be engaged with a sparrow-hawk that he was training to catch small birds in the fields in the same way as a falcon, he made his appearance holding a long parcel wrapped in white silk—containing two swords rolled up in antique brocade*—the beauty of which I had often heard of from his friends. He said to me—his usual politeness having something more of gravity than usual—"that his father had chosen these arms himself before his departure for Europe; that they would be in much safer custody in my keeping, than in a bachelor's chambers. That the Katana was in perfect preservation, but the Wakizashi—the small sword—had become slightly blunt."

He proceeded to explain to me the rules of fencing, which are entirely different to those of our masters of arms. Then every portion in detail he named, commenting, if necessary removing, weighing in his hand, and carefully replacing them. I was struck, as may be imagined, by so much friendliness and politeness. The friends of Prince S—— told me later, when congratulating me on my good fortune, that on one lively occasion they had, when opening some champagne bottles, cut the wire with the end of the Wakizashi.

I will commence my description of these swords by the Katana, but I shall not tie myself down always to giving the technical terms. The sheath (*saya*), in light wood, is lacquered in black. With the handle—which is of shark's skin (shark's palate)—it measures rather more than thirty-eight inches. The strongly-made cord (*tusaki*) of black silk, passed through the suspending ring lower down than the guard, formerly held the broad and flowing folds of ceremonial robes. The end (*kashira*) of *shibuichi* (an alloy of copper, the

tone of which can only be compared to the light and shadow thrown by the moon) and the oblong ring (*fuchi*) above the guard (*tsuba*) have, as a decorative

* The pair of swords which are worn in the belt, and which constitute the distinctive mark of nobles and soldiers, are called *Daisho*.



Experts examining Swords, from an Encyclopædia of the Seventeenth Century.

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pattern, petals from cherry blossoms in gold carried down the meanderings of a stream. The guard (*tsuba*) is of iron decorated on each side with gourds hanging, with their buds, their flowers, and their tendrils—it is signed: “NARA,” *saku* (*saku* is the Japanese equivalent of the Latin *fecit*).

A channel is cut along the whole length

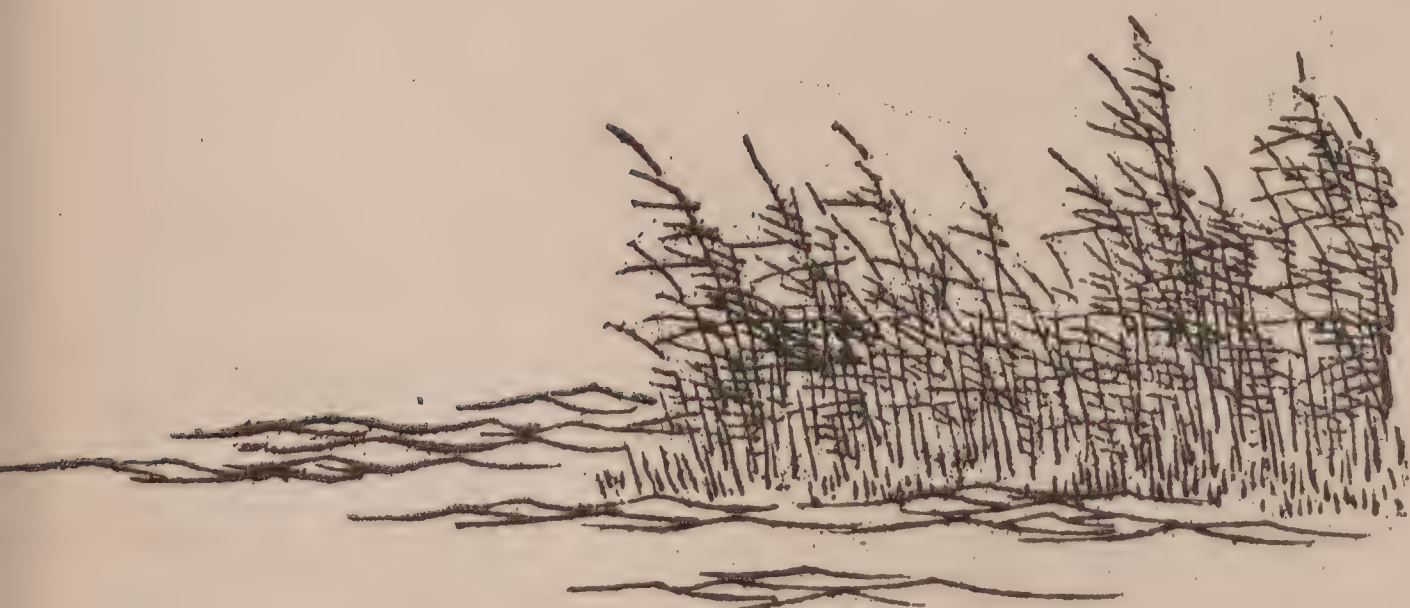
of the blade on each side, which has the effect of reducing the weight without lessening the strength. It has a grey tone without high polish, but at the same time bright and gleaming as a block of ice straight from a glacier. The edge is of a duller tone, and does not give back the bright reflections of the light, and the sharpening is carried to such absolute perfection that it proves the possibility of the legend, which tells of a sheet of paper being cut through as it came across a blade held in a stream of running water. The forger has inscribed his name on the part to be slipped into the handle, which has never been steeled, and which is pierced by a hole, through which a peg of bamboo is driven at right angles. His name was Kane-Tsugu, and he lived in the sixteenth century. Arms which are distinguished by the title “ancient” date up to the end of this century, since when collectors style them “modern.” The polish, which has been remarked upon with the greatest admiration by the chiefs of the Châtellerault factories, must have been arrived at by means of patient and methodical rubbings with cloths soaked in the sediment of grindstone troughs, whereby the blade was gradually sharpened. It is evident that the making of selected weapons was trusted by the nobles only to experts. In our climate all that is necessary to keep it bright is to rub it from time to time with soft Japanese paper, and never allow it to be oiled, or be touched by people who have not dry hands.

Occasionally these blades have Sanscrit characters inscribed in the hollow channel. It is no easy matter to translate them; they are abbreviations of sacred signs, the names of the five great Arias, or perhaps of star constellations.

The small sword, which was with the Katana and its inseparable com-



A Travelling Merchant of Old Swords; from *The Celebrated Spots in Kyoto*.





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panion in the life of a Japanese, gives rise to more varied consideration.*

The mounting is signed, "Goto Mitsu Masa." The Gotos constitute a family of makers of sword mounts (the forgers themselves in ancient times were sometimes also mounters), who have come down in regular succession from the middle of the fifteenth century to our day. Without a single exception they have worked for the Shoguns alone. Some of them have attached the name "Goto" to their finest pieces of chiselling, modelling, and alloying of metals, but not one of these could have been mistaken as coming from any other studio, so clever and ingenious are they all. The "Gotos" worked in gold and shakudo in the same manner as the ancient masters in iron, brass, embossed work, and translucent enamels.† The series of signatures of the members of the head and collateral branches of the family, with representations of imitations and forgeries, formed two volumes even before the end of the eighteenth century, issued for the use of collectors, who were passionate collectors of their work.‡

Goto Mitsu Masa has put on the Kashira, or "pommel," a branch of a cherry tree half hidden by a notice, on which is written a warning to passers-by:—"He who cuts a branch from this tree shall have his own fingers cut off."

Two gold ornaments (*menukis*) bound by and partly under a black silk cord, which is wound round the shark's-palate skin covered handle, and which were in the first instance meant to prevent the hand slipping, represent the merciless chase of a crane by a falcon. Close to the end a kind of hook in silver, is intended to secure the sword in the girdle (*akisashi*). The guard, which projects but little, is oval and of iron with incrustated decorations, pierced with holes for the Kodzuka and the Kogai to pass through. These guards, of which the decorative variety is almost endless, give the strongest

* See an article in the *Ethnographical Review*, Berlin, 1882, by M. G. Müller-Beeck.

† A volume upon "The Sword" is in preparation by Mr. Marcus Huish; it will be published by the Fine Art Society.

‡ See the index to the *Lectures on Japanese Art Work*, by Mr. Ernest Hart; delivered before the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, May, 1886.



Workshop of a Sword Forger, from an ancient Encyclopædia.



A young Samurai trying on Armour, after Hokusai.

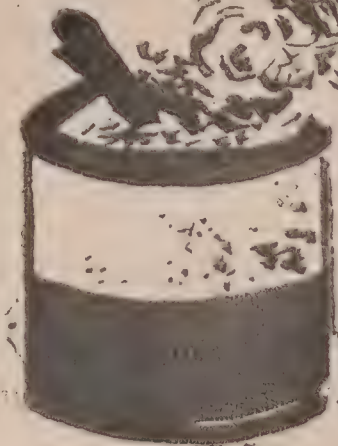
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proof of the genius of people. The most astonishing, to my mind, are those of hammered or cut iron; but we must not allow ourselves to linger on this subject, it is worthy of a particular study to itself. Moreover, they have been brought into our modern commerce by the importations of our great merchants. Every

Samurai wearing by right two swords, had to have as a change several sets of guards, each more or less valuable, more or less simple. Hence the large quantities that have been sent over, although at the same time they have nearly all disappeared in the torrent of circulation. Even the most simple appeal to an artistic taste, covered as they are either with bas-reliefs, or cut through with the greatest ingenuity; they form an infinite repertory of historic legends, or motives from nature, interpreted without exception with taste and spirit.

On the left side of the scabbard there is slipped into a groove a knife (the *kodzuka*) of which the blade is hidden, but the handle projects. On a ground of shakudo (*nanako*) with a hammered surface, having the appearance, as it were, of a coating of caviare, the artist has continued the decorative motive which is seen on the other parts of the sword, even on the least important portions, such as the rings (the *fuchis*)—a crescent moon emerging from vapours in gold and silver, blossoms of flowers, and snow crystals. The light snows of spring-time, buds bursting into flowers, and the silence of the moonlight, are the triple theme of the Chinese poets; here we have them with the added grace of the Japanese artist.

The blade, often of flexible steel, is sharpened two-thirds of its length; on it we have only the maker's name—Nobu-Yoshi, at *Myako*. Occasionally these blades, decorated with transversal lines on the reverse side, have written on them the name of one of their early owners, buddhistic prayers, short poems, or even series of landscapes such as the "Eight Views of the Lake of Biwa." These marks of the graver on a material most difficult to work on, are of a fineness and fidelity which are surprising to a degree.



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The kodzuka, I have heard said, was pushed into the fringed hair which the warriors—they have for ages worn flowing locks—fastened up before going into action. At the time of the American expedition under Commodore Perry, 1852-54, in the islands of Liou-Kiou (which were perhaps the cradle of the conquering Japanese), the chiefs still carried short arrows through the knot formed by their twisted hair. In fact, the soldiers who had wide lacquered helmets, wore them somewhat in the same position that ladies wear Rubens hats to-day.

The kodzuka, besides being used to fasten the heads cut off in battle to the saddle bow, was also a missile weapon whose special practice has been represented by Hokusai in his *Man-gwa*, and which appears very similar in use to a lance. In one of the romances of Bakin which he has illustrated, we are shown a passer-by attacked by two brigands;



Visitors to the Temple of Itzuku Shima examining celebrated Swords from the Treasure House. After Hokusai.

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one of the two grasps his shield, while his comrade cuts his throat by throwing his kodzuka at it. At all times it serves as a paper cutter—Japanese paper, being made of vegetable tissue, cannot be torn. The *kogai* (head-pin) balances the kodzuka on the opposite side of the guard. It is formed of a long blunt blade. The oldest that I have collected are of iron sharpened on two sides. It helped to mend the rents

in the leather belts that have already been mentioned.*

At a later date, when horses had been imported from Corea, the *kogai* served for grooming their hoofs, horses never being shod in Oriental countries. Also, at times it was divided into two longitudinal parts, and these two narrow instruments could be employed for eating rice. One hears it affirmed that one of these “head-pins” was stuck in

the scalp of an enemy by his victor in action, and that the “proofs” were collected when the engagement was completed victoriously.

The mounting of the most ancient swords has but rarely been preserved, as it is the custom to change them every twenty-five years. It is difficult to form any definite opinion on the subject. Nevertheless, I have in my collection a sword with mounts in cut iron, which is from the buddhistic workshops at Nara, about the tenth century; and it has a typical *kogai*, as, also, has a sword from the arsenal of the Prince of Kaga, with a blade dated 1190.

The blade of the small sword,† whose description I shall now briefly

* See a Separate Plate in the last number of *Artistic Japan*.

† I prefer to use the words “small sword,” as the Japanese names are varied.

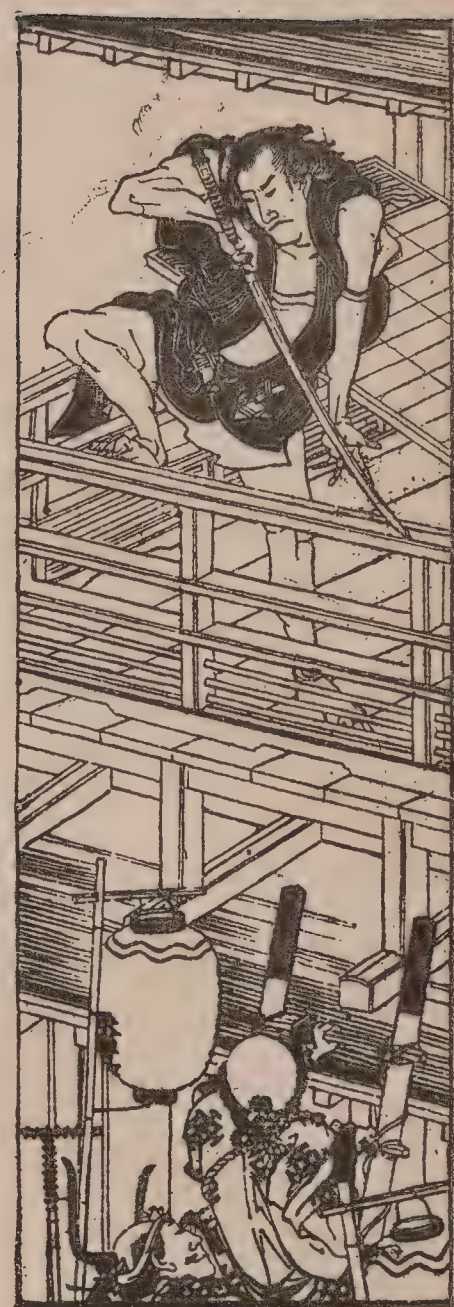
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give, measures rather more than eleven inches. It is of a somewhat bluer hue than that of the Katana, with a solidity which one can only compare to natural crystal. It bears the signature, "Haru-Mitsu, inhabitant of the province of Bizen, of the village of Osa-Fune," and the date 1522. The "clouds" are the traces of the steeling, and they reveal the methods of some special time, province, and workshop. This complicated science should be studied by experts.

The Katana was the fighting weapon. The Katana watched over the life of its owner. The Wakizashi, on the other hand, was the guardian of his honour, in the past, the present, and the future. In the home it occupied a place designed for it in a special room, on a sword-stand placed in a niche. It consummated the death of its conquered or insulted master, unable to do justice himself, or condemned by law, but with the privilege of not submitting himself to the supreme terror of the executioner. It was the special weapon used for *Hara-kiri* or *seppu*. Originally, vanquished warriors would not surrender themselves to their conquerors.

The Hara-kiri was not officially recognised till the time of the Taiko-Sama. In a chosen part of the house the family and friends gathered together, and in presence of an officer appointed by the prince, the doomed one was clothed with a white robe open from the chest to the waist; the judgment was listened to; the witnesses were addressed, and the last injunctions given. The small sword was taken, lying on a small tray raised on feet. It was covered in white silk as far as the edge. The man inflicted on himself a gash upwards, and at the moment that the features contracted themselves, at the moment that mental power ceased, a friend, standing behind, cut off his

head. Count C. de Montblanc in 1865 thus concisely described it—I quote his own words: "In Japan, the man who deserves death, and dies by his own hand, is preserved from the shame entailed by his crime. In bravely accepting the responsibility of his act, he, so to speak, destroys the guilt. He bequeaths to his family the memory of his courage and dignity; it weighs in the balance with the recollection of his crime,



Episode in a Siege, after Hokusai.



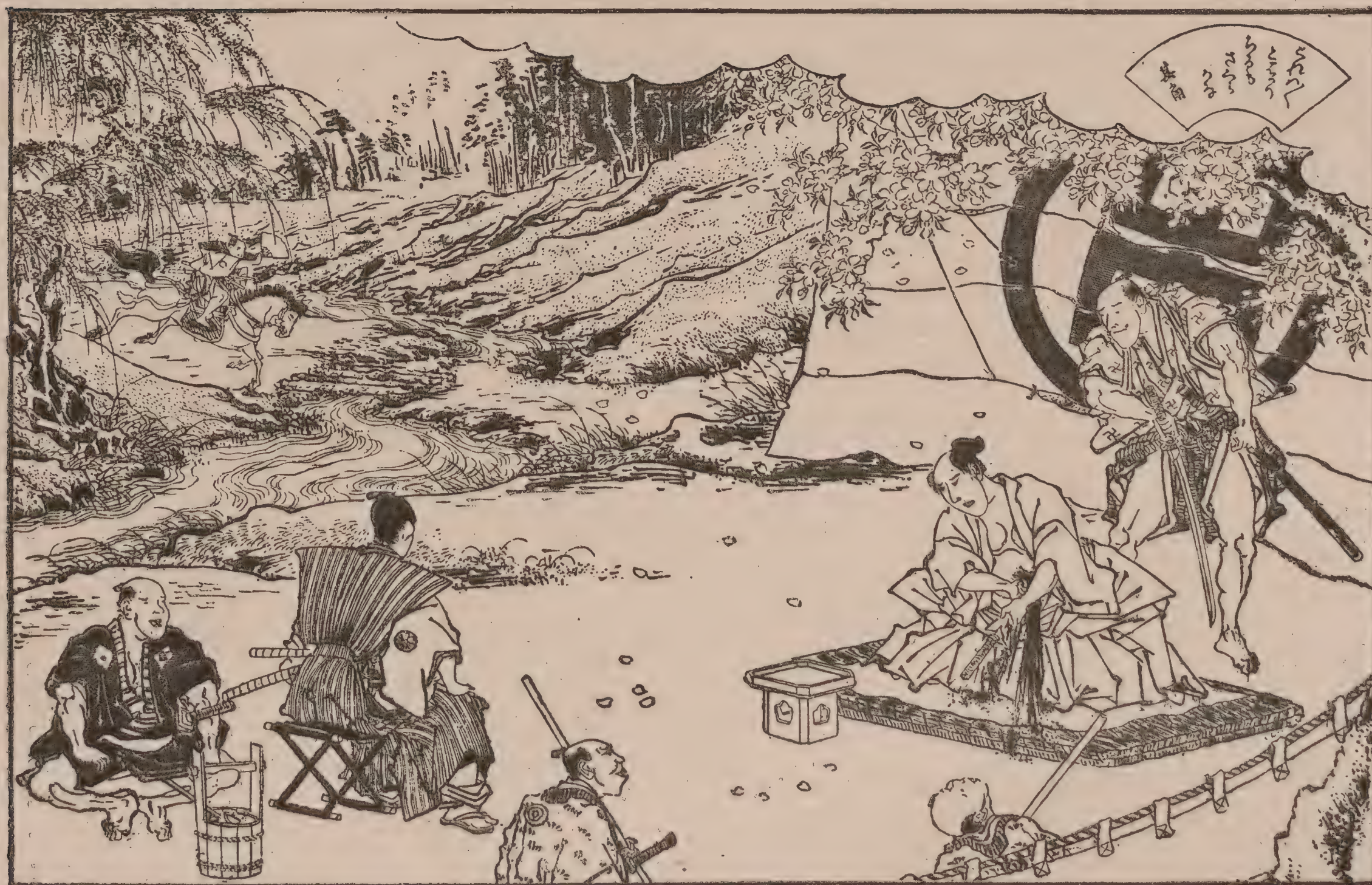
Sharpening a Blade, from an Encyclopædia of the Eighteenth Century.

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and thus the moral position which was his right, and the respect in which he had been held are preserved."

"Such is the moral signification of the Japanese small sword whose use might be an honour to the most advanced civilization."

PHILIPPE BURTY.



Hara-kiri beneath the Cherry Trees, after a Romance illustrated by Toyokuni.

DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

Plate AEE. The Sword for ceremonial use and for combat, that is here reproduced with all its accessories and separate parts, has a highly decorative effect. It is a typical specimen of the arms which the Daimios used in their courtly functions and their every-day life. It was called the TII-TAGAMA. Siebold has given a drawing of one, but does not name it. The blade is one-third of an inch thick, is lightened by a deep channel on each side, is one inch and an eighth wide, and fifteen and one-third inches long from the guard, which is of shibuichi. It comes from the forges of Bizen, probably before the seventeenth century, but it is unsigned. The absence of any signature on exceptional pieces was the special affectation of certain forgers. Their work was to be recognised, however, by the various cloudings upon the surface. In the specimen before us, there is no "clouding." The mounts are also without signature, and are entirely of silver. They must have come from an artist living on the estate of some daimio, or some master who supported him. They appear to date from the middle of the eighteenth century. By the simplicity of effect, and the breadth of workmanship, they remind us of goldsmiths' work of the time of Louis XV. The *mon* or crest of the first possessors has been repeated in twenty places on it, ingeniously chosen so as to prevent monotony. This armorial bearing is a slight modification of that of the powerful family of the Arimas. The handle of the *kodzuka*, the *kogai* divided into two, the tip of the sheath pierced for a cord with double tassels, the *kashira*, the upper part also pierced by a heart-shaped hole, the reason for which I am ignorant, and a sort of hook which prevents it falling through the girdle when a deep bow is made, are also all ornamented with it. The sheath is of lac, the colour of a raspberry, lightly sprinkled with gold in flakes. The colour blends happily with the metal, and the beauty of the handle adds greatly to the general effect of perfection. PH. B.

Plate ACF is the reproduction of a painting by Ogata Korin (1660-1716). Korin is, beyond all other Japanese artists, the one whose work is marked by the greatest originality. It is a rare thing to find growing in the domains of art, a newly-created style, not the result of logical and ordinary development, but the effect of successive methods. If one is inclined to investigate in this direction with regard to Korin, one will find oneself entirely on the wrong tack. His art came from no outside source, he created it in its entirety. According to the rule just laid down, one might truly consider him as a pupil in painting of Sotatsu, an adept of the Tosa school, for from this master were derived the effects in mother-of-pearl, which characterise Korin's work. But here is the limit of any visible signs of likeness, for, from the fulness of his compositions, and the brightness of his tones, from the extreme originality of his interpretation of nature, which he sees sometimes from some entirely novel point, even representing it with a conventionality, intentional and strangely striking, it would be difficult to discover any forerunner of his work. In many cases the apparently extravagant excess of his designs is carried to such an extent as to disenchant his most passionate admirers. But in considering the brilliant execution and master-hand shown in such passages, and by reference in another direction to works where the brush of the artist is more serious, and has complied with a wish for perfect correctness, it is impossible to doubt that there is the profoundest calculation in the eccentricities which have at first surprised the eye, and whose object one now feels obliged to inquire into. This is not a difficult task. From the first occasion when the name of Korin appeared in these pages (No. 5), we have said, that according to him, art should not retreat before certain exaggerations, when it is their object to show such and such a peculiarity of a subject. To this explanation a second must be added, to determine exactly the genius of the artist. If it is true, as Mr. Gonse in the number mentioned so decidedly affirmed, that the feeling for decoration is the very essence of the Japanese æstheticism, in order to understand its necessary and fundamental condition, it becomes natural that every artist must do some decorative work. Not one of them could—or wished to—avoid it, without running the risk of belieing the inborn temperament of his race. Korin alone, perhaps, submits to the rule in a manner entirely unconscious. The decorative

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idea flashes out in his work very visibly, it haunts it without ceasing, and comes before any other consideration. The most celebrated works of the artist, his larger compositions, of which one alone serves to cover the entire surface of a whole screen, are simply a sort of defiance flung at all exact analysing. But the effect of the colour becomes dazzling, and the power of the drawing is wonderful. More modest in style is the page that we have reproduced. It is taken from a set for a screen with eight leaves. In these paintings of flowers the effect, although it is intense and original, is obtained without sacrifice to truth. To the decorative idea, an attentive observation of nature, freely interpreted, is added knowledge of rendering, and a complete knowledge of form.

Plate ACG. Two birds (the *curucca* or garden warbler of Japan), among rose trees by moonlight; by Sugakudo, taken from an album of forty-eight engraved plates of birds and flowers, which appeared in the middle of the present century. Was Sugakudo, when he designed these pages, following the example of Korin, moved by a preconceived desire to fill them with the intensely decorative feeling which makes them stand alone in their beauty? We cannot know, but it is certain that, consciously or not, he succeeded in producing an extremely beautiful series, as well from this special point of view, as with regard to the truly lifelike representation of a collection of birds of various kinds, of which each is given in its natural surroundings. From every plate in the series, our decorative artists might find some thoroughly interesting studies, and we propose to make more than one reproduction for their benefit.

The Plate FJ, after Harunobu, will be recognised as the fellow to an engraving reproduced in No. 3, accompanied by explanations with regard both to the work and the artist; to this we would refer our readers.

Plates AD and ADD. Our series of industrial models continued. Plate AD represents a quantity of leaves from the maple, with those of the *ghinko biloba*, but the latter treated in a fanciful calligraphic manner. Plate ADD shows branches of bamboo mixed with full-blown chrysanthemum blossoms.

Plate ACA. Six sword guards in iron, each executed by a different hand, and for this reason calculated to lend themselves well to study and examination, inasmuch as a similar subject is treated in different manners. Within the border of one of the guards are a shrimp and a fish of the family of the cyprinoides, lying on rose leaves. Close by is a lobster, bent so as to form by itself an arabesque; and, in another, there is a carp fighting with the foaming waves. At the foot of the page a silurus, with its smooth skin, finds itself arranged with a gourd. The series is completed with a guard formed of a dragon with curving body, as artistic as it is lithe, and lastly with a sixth guard, decorated—truly no subject is despised by the Japanese, even as a decoration for his deeply venerated sword—with a common turnip, with boldly treated foliage.

Of these six swords, four are signed: that with the dragon bears the name of Itshiriu-Uki; that with the lobster was made by Nori-Hidé; Hana-Fussa forged the polished iron silurus, and the gourd; and the one with the shrimp and the fish together, is the work of Kinai.

Plate ABC represents a vase of earthenware, decorated with a flowering plum branch, and made at Kyoto in the eighteenth century. The style of decoration is that of Kenzan, some clever imitator seemingly having finished the work.

Ogata Kenzan (1663–1743) was the celebrated potter, one of whose productions we showed in No. 6. We may here mention the fact that this artist was the younger brother of Korin. Both of these men were distinguished by a universal genius. Korin added to his celebrity as a painter, that of being a wonderful lacquerer; having produced boxes the possession of which causes such warm discussion at the present time; while Kenzan was the potter that we know, as well as one of the most refined painters, and sometimes also a lacquerer.

Plate ABI is the reproduction of a bottle in bronze of a dark patina, dating from the seventeenth century. It is Chinese in style; the gracefully curved neck resembles the head and throat of a swan, so completing by a motive from nature an outline entirely the idea of the artist. The piece is unsigned.

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SEPARATE PLATES.

AEE. Small Sword, with Sheath, *Kodzuka*, and *Kogai*.

ABC. Flower Vase in Bizen Pottery.

AD. Decorative Design. Flowers and Leaves.

ACF. *Kakémono*. Poppies. By Kōrin. (Double Page.)

ACA. Six Sword Guards.

FJ. A Young Girl. By Harunobu.

ADD. Decorative Design. Bamboo and Chrysanthemums.

ACG. Birds in the Bamboos. Moonlight.

ABI. Bronze Vase with Swan's Neck.





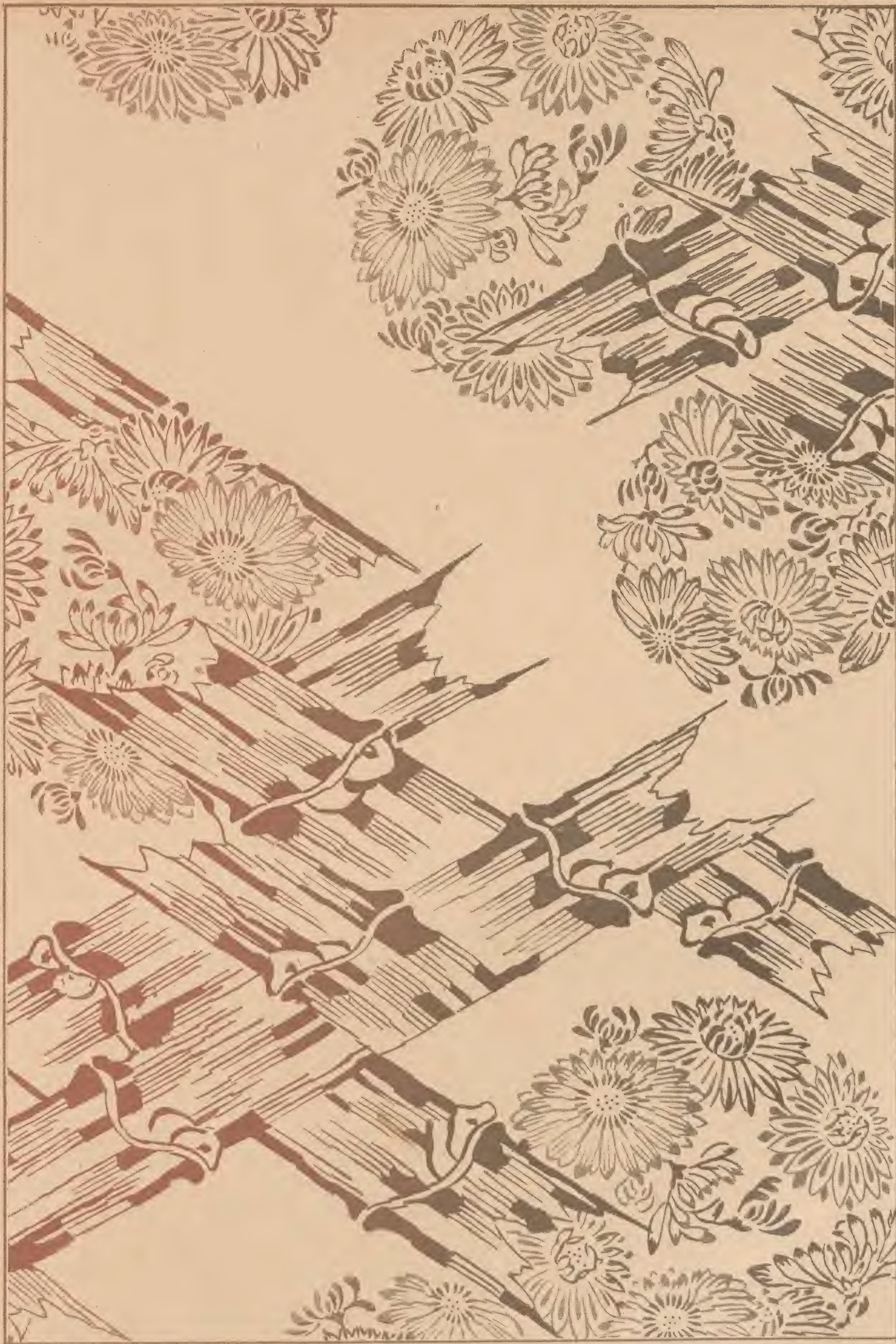


















Panel in lac, by Ritsuo.

RITSUO AND HIS SCHOOL.

Comparatively few years have passed since Japanese Art was first made known to us in Europe by its best and most characteristic examples ; for until 1830 nearly all that had been seen in Europe were the formal and bastard products destined for European consumption, and manufactured for European use, which were exported during the 18th century by the Dutch, to meet the commercial rather than the artistic European demand. The

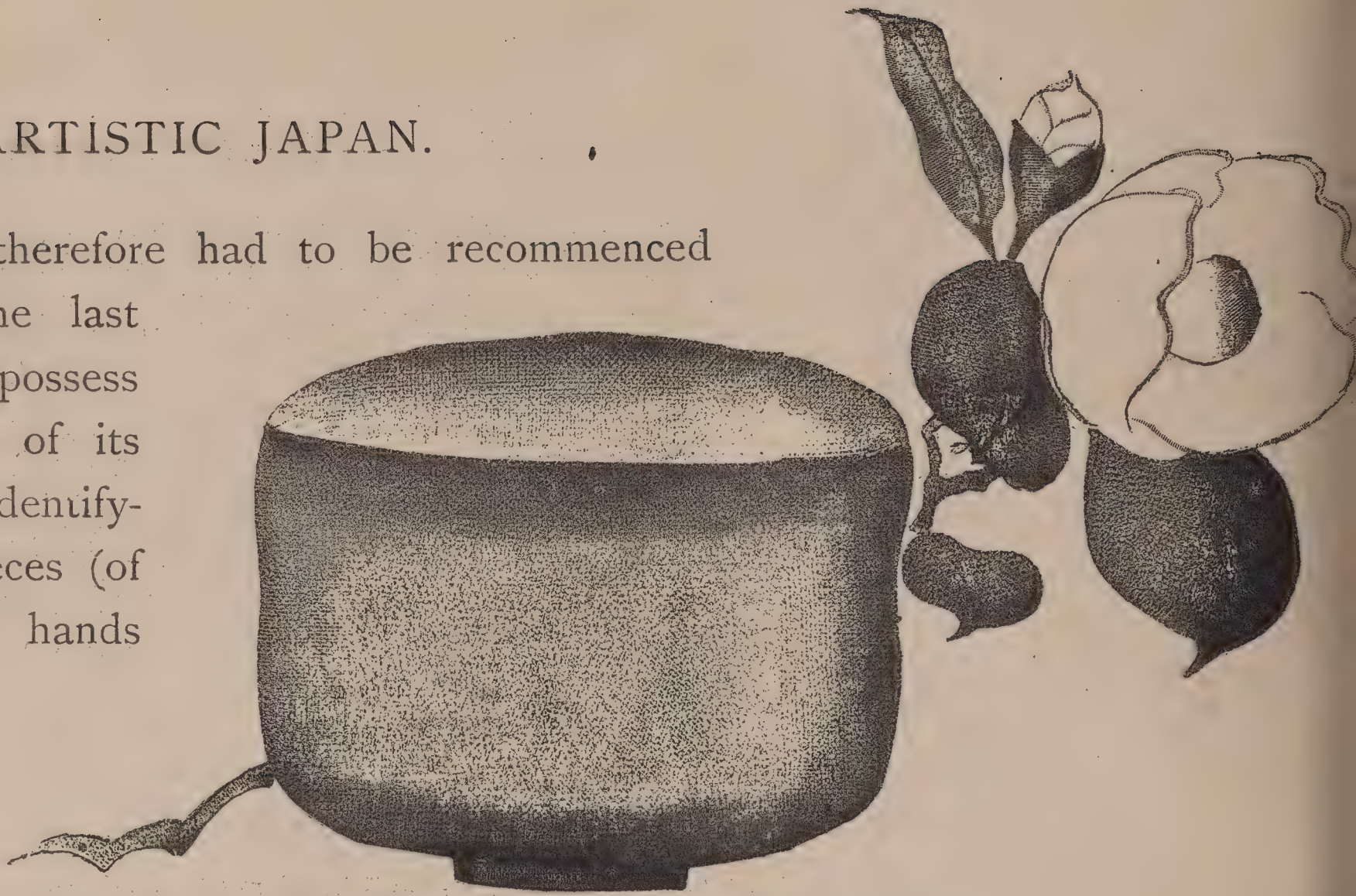
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study of Japanese Art has therefore had to be recommenced and reconstructed during the last few years ; and although we possess already the larger outlines of its history, and the means of identifying certain of its masterpieces (of which many are in private hands in Europe), a large field remains open to investigations. We have yet much to do to define the individuality, the temperament of its masters, and the history and characteristics of its schools.

The history of the Art of the West has been handled in every sense : its psychology and its *technique* have been studied, and even its degeneration and its counterfeits have been analysed. Not only have the lives and the influence of each of the masters of Western Art been closely followed up, but their artistic descendants, the influence which they have undergone, or which they have exerted, the comparison of their works and the changes of their style, have been the subject of deep study. To the names of Holbein or of

Palissy, of Grinling Gibbons or of Wedgwood, of Albert Durer or of Benvenuto Cellini, are attached in our minds the association of periods accurately classified, and of styles definitely recognised. On the contrary, except among a small number of "Japanist" experts, the name of a Japanese artist is nothing more than the shadowy name of an unknown being ; at any rate it does not excite the idea of a period, of a style, or of a personal genius. Japan, for us, was born yesterday ; although its distance from us has been relatively annihilated, its difficult and complex language separates us from it, and it is not easy to obtain the information which would make the name of each of its masters a flag under which would be ranged epochs, styles, and preferences.

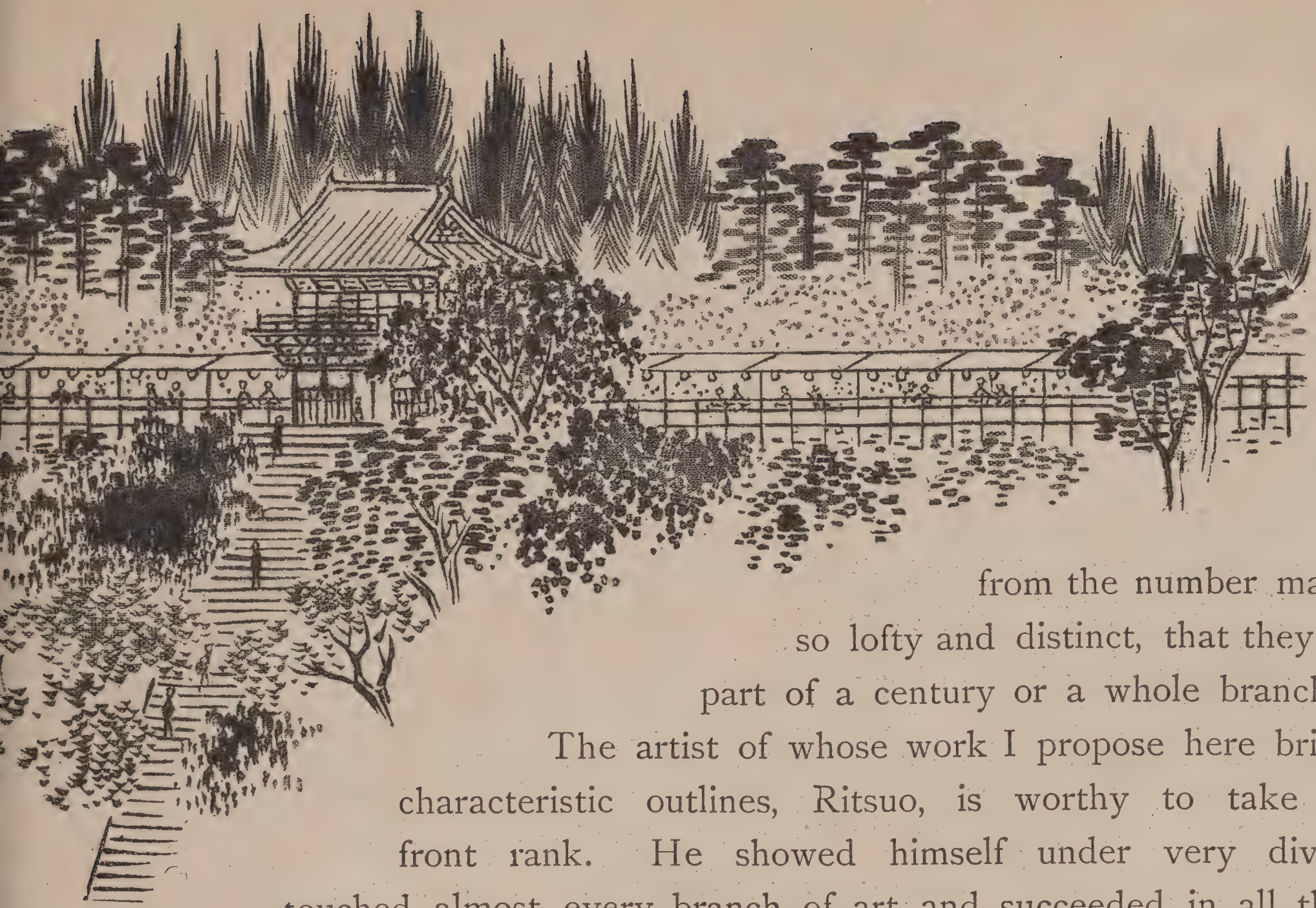
To attempt such a work with any completeness or extension is perhaps rash at the present time, for certain documents are still wanting ; nevertheless we have been



Drawing from an Album, by Hoetsu (School of Ritsuo).



Portrait Statuette of Tenjin, by Ritsuo (Hart Collection).



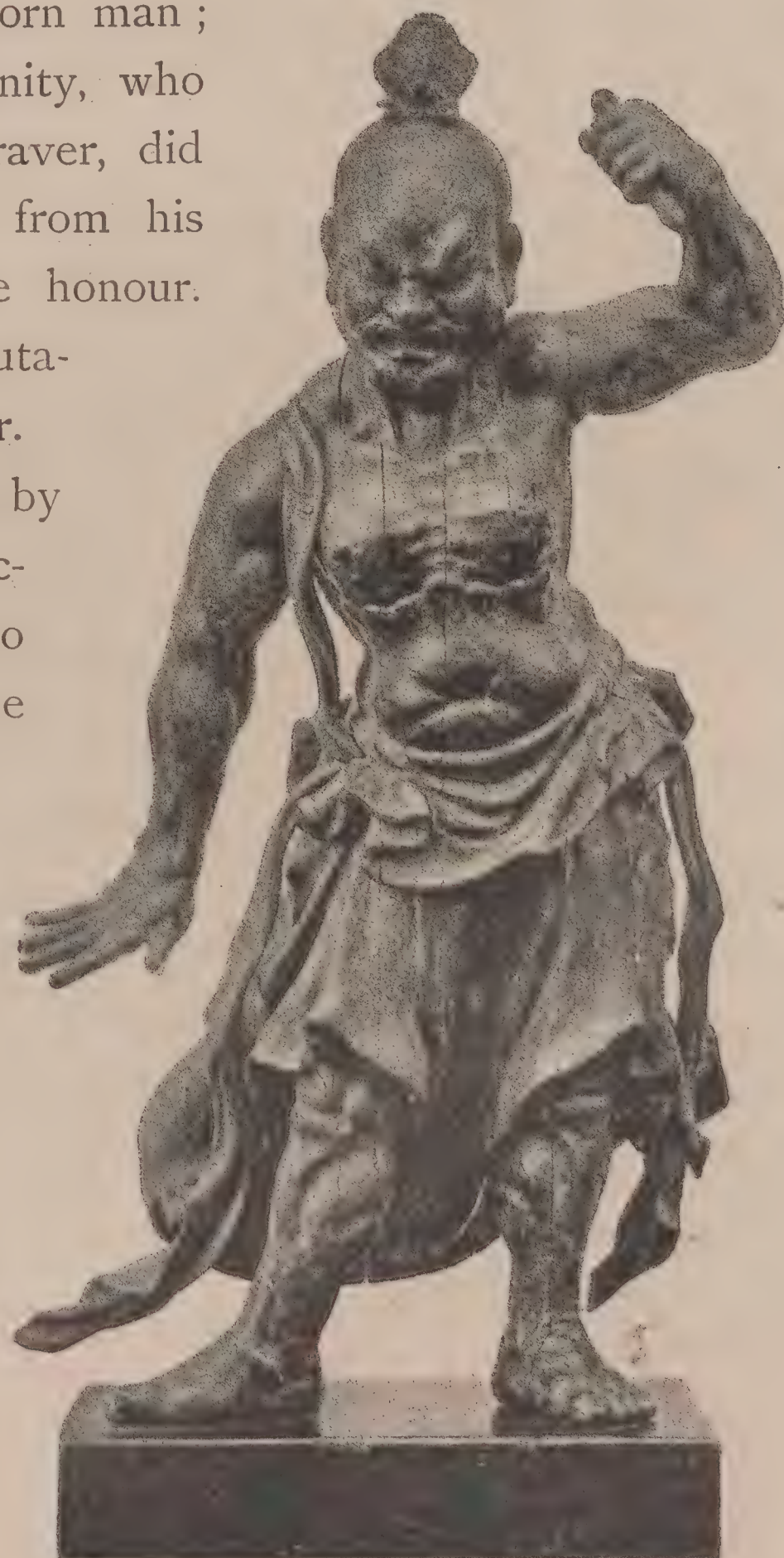
able now for
some time to
distinguish

from the number many individualities
so lofty and distinct, that they carry with them
part of a century or a whole branch of art.

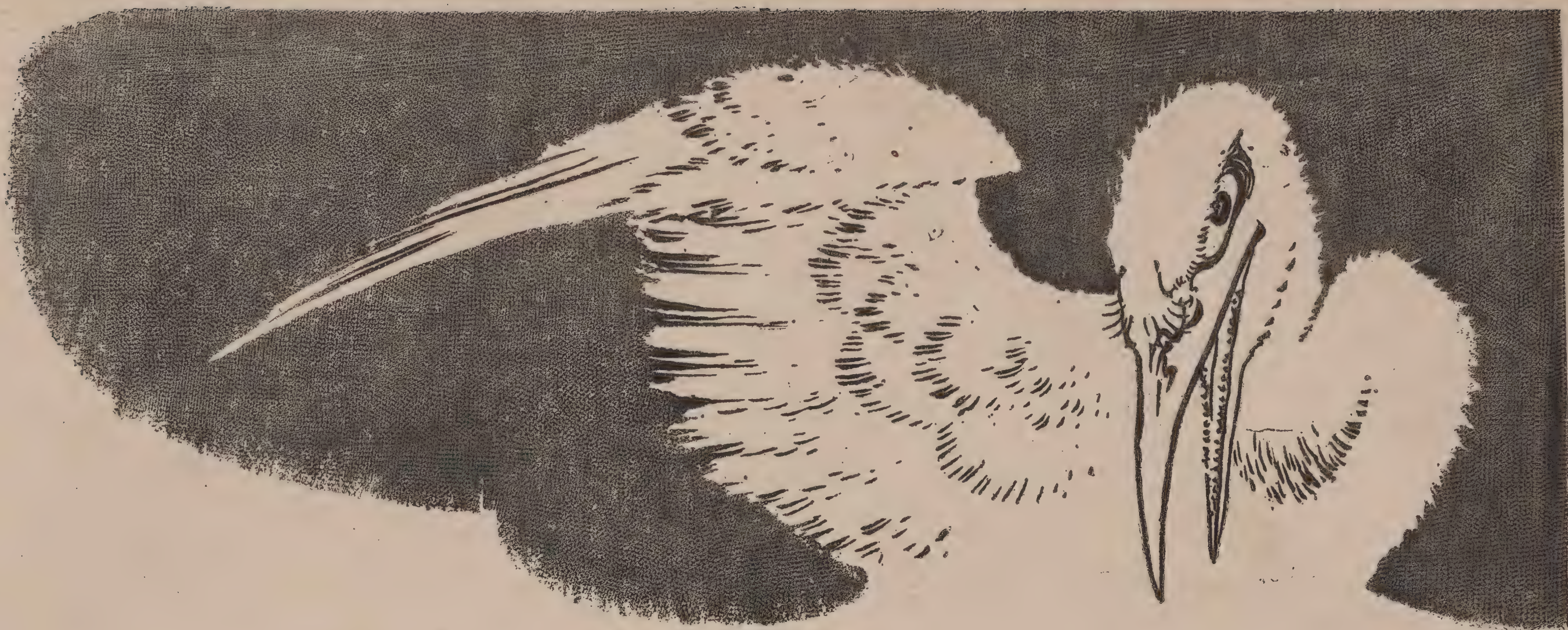
The artist of whose work I propose here briefly to sketch the characteristic outlines, Ritsuo, is worthy to take a place in the front rank. He showed himself under very divers aspects: he touched almost every branch of art, and succeeded in all that he attempted. We find him as painter, sculptor, lacist, potter; and the clay which he modelled, the lacs which he polished, the ivory or the wood which he carved, the panels which he decorated, are counted to-day among the *chefs-d'œuvre* of art.

Ogawa Ritsuo, of Kuwano, province of Isé, held the rank of Samurai, that is to say of the knightly warrior, but he early renounced the career of arms to turn towards art. In Japan the class of nobles had but one occupation under the Shoguns, that of war. It was a degradation to occupy themselves in agriculture, and especially so in commerce: these were considered occupations unworthy of a well-born man; but the noble, even were he prince or of kingly dignity, who laid down his sabre to take up the brush or the graver, did not derogate from his dignity. His name gathered from his artistic achievements greater lustre and more durable honour. The netsuké, skilfully sculptured, counted towards a reputation even more than a head courageously cut off in war.

Thus it may be understood that Ritsuo, samurai by birth, remained none the less samurai after he had accomplished his *chefs-d'œuvre*. Nay, more, those who were not highly born, but who were attached to the court of a great daimio in virtue of their talents, were frequently ennobled, and took high rank amongst the two-sworded men. I possess a considerable number of objects of art signed by names accompanied with the titles of Hogen, of Kami (lord); among them masks of Nô, signed Kami-No-Wasa, a princely title, and not only in my own,



Statuette of a Nô in lacquered wood (Hart Collection).



but I am sure also in many other collections in this country, there exist kakémonos, netsukés, sword guards, and masks of Nô, of which the authors were ennobled for their artistic eminence.

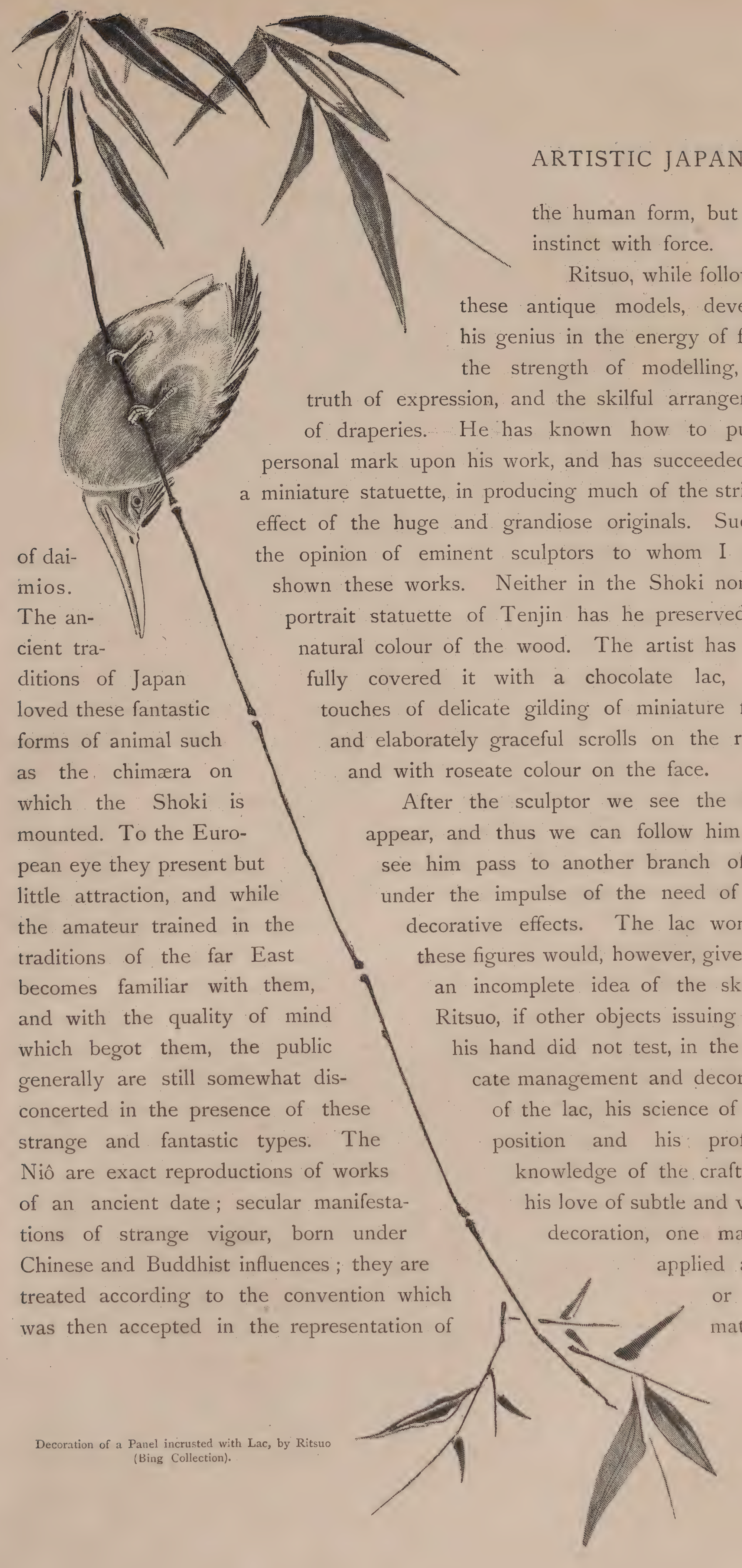
Ritsuo, already celebrated as a soldier, and even as a tactician, made it his glory to become an art workman, and it is as such we have to study him.

It has already been said that if our middle ages were familiar with artist workmen such as the Benvenuto Cellinis and the Maestro Georgios, a wide separation subsequently opened between art and craft, between great art and minor art. In Japan no difference was known between great art and minor art; art was never separated from craft. The people had such a craving for, and such a sense of art in their private life, that they applied it to the most ordinary objects of domesticity. Their sabres, the medicine boxes and netsukés which hung at their girdle, the toilet utensils of the lady, the writing and despatch boxes, the tea jars, the letter presses and the manuscript boxes, contributed to the ornament of the home or the costume. In the work of Ritsuo this constant intimate union of art and craft shows brilliantly.

As a sculptor he is seen in many works, some of which are here illustrated from my collections. One is a statuette, a portrait figure, of the Minister Tenjin, in full ceremonial dress, grave, sedate, life-like, full of dignity and grace. Another, a pair of Niôs (guardians of the temple), reductions of the celebrated Niô at Nara of the 11th century. *Minusculus colossi*, a little less than a foot high—they preserve all the characters and much of the grandeur and strength of the celebrated originals. Or again, this SHOKI, the warrior of Chinese antiquity, the legendary persecutor



Medicine Box incrusting in Mother o' Pearl and Ivory,
by Hanzan (Pupil of Ritsuo).



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the human form, but are instinct with force.

Ritsuo, while following these antique models, develops his genius in the energy of form, the strength of modelling, the truth of expression, and the skilful arrangement of draperies. He has known how to put a personal mark upon his work, and has succeeded, in a miniature statuette, in producing much of the striking effect of the huge and grandiose originals. Such is the opinion of eminent sculptors to whom I have shown these works. Neither in the Shoki nor the portrait statuette of Tenjin has he preserved the natural colour of the wood. The artist has skilfully covered it with a chocolate lac, with touches of delicate gilding of miniature finish and elaborately graceful scrolls on the robes, and with roseate colour on the face.

After the sculptor we see the lacist appear, and thus we can follow him and see him pass to another branch of art under the impulse of the need of new decorative effects. The lac work of these figures would, however, give only an incomplete idea of the skill of Ritsuo, if other objects issuing from his hand did not test, in the delicate management and decoration of the lac, his science of composition and his profound knowledge of the craft. In his love of subtle and varied decoration, one material applied alone, or two materials

of dai-
mios.

The ancient traditions of Japan loved these fantastic forms of animal such as the chimæra on which the Shoki is mounted. To the European eye they present but little attraction, and while the amateur trained in the traditions of the far East becomes familiar with them, and with the quality of mind which begot them, the public generally are still somewhat disconcerted in the presence of these strange and fantastic types. The Niô are exact reproductions of works of an ancient date; secular manifestations of strange vigour, born under Chinese and Buddhist influences; they are treated according to the convention which was then accepted in the representation of



Medicine Box in Lac by Ritsuo (Hart Collection).

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in juxtaposition do not suffice. Everything comes under his hand and seems good, provided that the substance employed concurs in perfecting the effect sought—mother-of-pearl, tortoiseshell, pottery, metals, and enamels contribute to enrich his palette. He incrusts, he models various tinted compositions, he damascenes, he solders and rivets with marvellous character. I select from the examples which I have at hand almost at random. Here is a little panel in which we find expressed a fable analogous to the legend of the fatal box of Pandora, a universal myth which haunts all literature. From a background of black lac the demon emerges, modelled in a special composition

which recalls the *gesso* of Italy. The mask and the bâton are in green and blue *gesso*, the shell is encrusted in white pottery, the armorial bearings are in mother-of-pearl, and all these substances, far from being discordant, melt into a learned harmony and produce a very sober effect. It is here that Ritsuo shows himself a true initiator. No one before him had attempted the combination of such a variety of materials. By the side of mother-of-pearl, of lac, and of gold—of which the whole gamut was probably already known in Japan—he quickly perceived the varied resources which the use of clay and the introduction of ceramic effects permitted, and so he becomes a keramist who models and bakes in a little oven constructed in his workshop; at first, small pieces expressly for the purpose of enriching his lacs by incrustations, and then, tempted and drawn away by the pleasure of the craft, we see him treating



Shoki by Ritsuo (Hart Collection).



Lac Box, by Ritsuo (Hart Collection).

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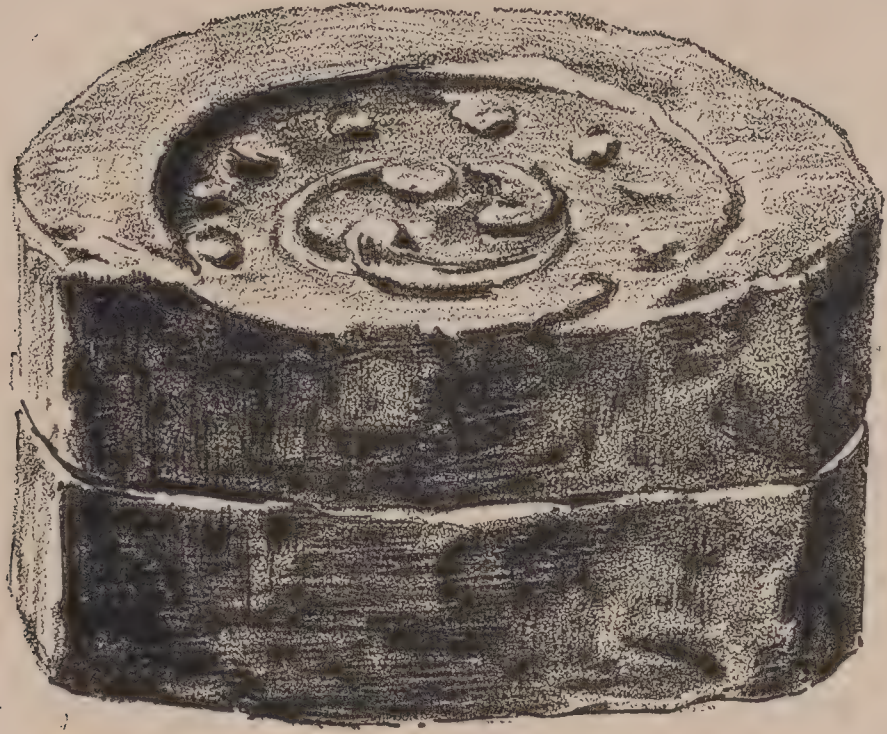
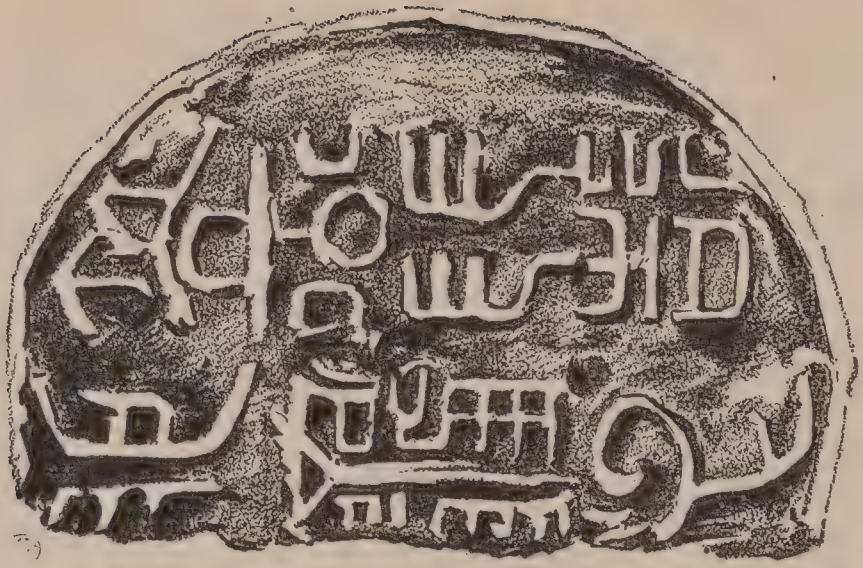
clay alone and enamelling it. He becomes a potter. On a panel of wood hanging before me, as I write, the soft parts are skilfully rubbed away so as to show all the beauties of the natural grain, and producing the hard veins in relief, giving a solid decorative effect by their undulating lines. He models on this, or in very low relief, and boldly foreshortened, an Apostle of Buddha in an atti-

tude of ecstatic prayer; the figure a harmony of brown and chocolate *gesso*, clothed with diapers in pale green faience. In another panel on my walls a fish and weeds in *gesso*, and shells in faience stand out in relief on a background of red and low-toned gold.

The gold of Ritsuo, like the gold of Korin, would deserve a special study of itself, so full is it of novel and rare effects, and so capable of running through a whole gamut of sober but yet brilliant tones of red, yellow, and green. A magnificent writing-box was shown in London by Mr. Hayashi; a ceremonial elephant in brilliant colour, with incrustations, made the cover one of the most beautiful pieces of decoration which can be seen. Mr. Bing possesses a cabinet charmingly decorated with a kingfisher, of which the design is reproduced here. It is a panel of brown wood with the veins in relief; the bird is polychromatic faience in one piece; all the gamut of reds, greens, blues, and greys are employed in it. The intro engraved in the text from my collection, showing the portrait of Daruma, is also in coloured *gesso*



Box in Lac, by Ritsuo (Hart Collection).



Box in Pottery (Bing Collection).

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in low relief incrustated on natural wood. A manuscript box reproduced in Mr. Huish's work on the Arts and Crafts of Japan is decorated with temple tiles in green faience, one of them showing a demon's head in black, grey, and gold. A small box belonging to Mr. Bing is in pottery. One might be tempted to push with the foot this broken end of tile, so well are the characteristic ornaments imitated, and so plainly do the broken edges seem to show (where their varnish is artfully worn away) the rough grain of a block of baked clay. On the lower surface of this little box Ritsuo has imitated his own seal, which seems worn and broken, although in reality it is perfectly complete.

It is here that perhaps the fissure in the armour of a great artist is seen. He loves to play with his material. He pushes his virtuosity to the point of deceiving the eye of the amateur as to the substances employed. He amuses himself with making (and with what astonishing ability!) a piece of pottery which is in reality a piece of lac, or a quasi sculpture in wood or in bronze, which is really made of potter's clay. We may fairly ask ourselves whether an artist of ability ought to descend to this trifling; but we may remember that amongst ourselves also certain artists of the 18th century committed themselves to this form of illusion. Carlo Crivelli painted broken marble so that the eye might well be deceived. Ritsuo, playfully handling his brush, amused himself with this innocent pleasantry. On two grand screens, with the background of gold, he has painted appliqués of ancient images, the torn remains of antique pictures, and with such truth, that amateurs and painters, assembled to examine it, could not believe their eyes, and that even the touch hardly sufficed to convince them of the humorous and brilliant illusions in which the master delighted. But, outside these tricks of skill, Ritsuo knew how to be a painter of consummate science. More than one kakémono in European collections show his mastery of delicate drawing, of exquisitely graduated colour, and his intimate knowledge of the various schools of Chinese and Japanese painting. Around such an artist a school grew up, although none of his pupils reached the mastery of Ritsuo. Among those who became followers of his style, must be mentioned especially Hanzan, Zeshin and Kenya for their lacs, and Hoitsu for

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his paintings. Hanzan came next to the master as a lacist in certain effects of great brilliancy; in decoration of warm colour. A large manuscript box by Hanzan, incrustated with fishes and shells, and crustations in proper colours upon a background of rich avanturine gold, shows a mastery over the broad effects of form and skilful tintings of lac and of pearl, which not even Ritsuo excelled, and which no one else has approached. But these are qualities more easy to imitate than vigour of drawing, fecundity of invention, passion and originality, or profound science in arrangement of the qualities in which the painter, sculptor, and keramist, to whom I have devoted these imperfect lines, show among the most brilliant of his fellows.

Hoitsu, like Ritsuo, was born of noble family (1760-1827). He was the son of Prince Sakai, but left the aristocratic world to devote himself to art. The specimens of work which I possess seem to me to savour of the inspiration of Korin as well as of Ritsuo. It has the qualities of brilliant colour, and original, but fantastic invention and a purposeful disdain of naturalistic effect. Zeshin has only just ceased to work. Like Ritsuo, he wielded the brush and the graver, as well as being an accomplished lacist. He has a wilder and less restrained fancy than the illustrious master who seemed in no small measure to have inspired his work; and he inherited, or adopted, the fancy for imitating in lac every other kind of material. You take up a plate which shows all the golden sombre browns and yellows of an ancient bronze. You find it light as a feather. It is made of the finest lac, perfectly reproducing all the lustre and subtle varieties of colour of a bronze discoloured by age. His *surimonos* are especially celebrated, and are distinguished by an inexhaustible fancy, but are often disfigured by careless drawing and defective sense of beauty.

Kenya is another Hanzan, but feebler in colour, and far less skilled in the intimate marriage of material, in firmness of outline, and in richness of pictorial effect.



DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

Hokusai gives us a subject for Plate ABA. We again find him taking a careful study from Nature, in this one of the *Thirty-six Views of Fujiyama*, from which book we have already given a specimen in No. 4 of *Artistic Japan*, and we would refer the reader for fuller details to the last mentioned number. The *Thirty-six Views* constitute a series of landscapes printed in colours, and of a size larger by one quarter than our reproductions. Landscape is here the single object in the mind of the artist, in contradistinction to the *Hundred Views* (whence we have also already taken pages) which combine in their composition also scenes of Japanese Life, and where Fujiyama is hardly more than a shape in the decorative idea.

Plate ABA shows a deserted portion of the province of Soshin, or Sugami, called Umazava, in the neighbourhood of Yedo. Fuji raises his snowy crest above the pine forests which clothe his sides, and craves search at their leisure in the pools among the marshes—the lowest slopes of the mountain are cut into broad tracts by a mist whose surprising thickness will not surprise those who have been able to put themselves absolutely in the presence of one of the remarkable fogs which at times envelop the narrow islands of Japan. The cover of this number also reproduces one of the *Thirty-six Views*, this full of an even more strikingly impressionist feeling, in which the immense mountain Fuji against a blue sky is all red from the rays of the setting sun.

Side by side of Hokusai the landscapist, we have Hokusai the “popularist,” whom we have seen before.

Once more we give some pages from the *Man-gwa* reproduced in Plate AEH.

On the left hand we have *fat* people, a comical contrast to the *thin* ones; of which one can see a series of specimens in No. 9.

In the first scene a wrestling master is pummelled by his pupil, the former seeming to be half asleep as he calmly smokes his pipe. The judge patiently awaits the resuming of the real contest. In the second scene two men, about to enjoy themselves at the fair, sing to their own accompaniment on the *samisen*, much to the amusement of the servant girl who brings them their tea. The three personages in the last scene are bathing; a woman is already in the wooden tub, another bather is washing his head, while the third, who is already leaving, is still holding towels in his hand, and seems to inhale the fresh air with no little delight.

On the other page an oil merchant waits, in a melancholy mood, for customers; glass-blowers apply themselves to their business; and two makers of a dainty similar to the French *berlingot*, stretch out the sweetmeat, while a third cuts it into little sticks.

Below the person who beats so energetically with his hammer on a block, was occupied in making a paste of rice, which he would have cooked in the little oven to be seen to his left; a joker has come, and, unnoticed, has removed the compound, so that the poor man strikes a violent blow upon the empty block, to the evident and exquisite delight of the two assistants.

Plate AAA, taken from the same album, whence we have already borrowed Plate AJE in No. 10, represents a sparrow, or perhaps a flycatcher, perching on a brier (*Rosa rugosa*).

Painted wood objects such as this one (Plate IG) are among the first manifestations of artistic taste to be found not only in Japan, but also in our western world. Before the invention of improvements which allow the working of stone or metal, wood was the material which best lent itself to the imperfect instruments, and varied tintings satisfied the primitive taste. Colour struck the eye more vividly than even a bronze or marble statue. Single tinted specimens of plastic art necessitate a certain amount of education, which only comes after years of civilisation.

It is said that, as in the western world, there is found in Japan, painted wood at the very commencement of all artistic production. The temples of Shiba and Nikko possess some dating to the seventh century.

This personage is the hero of some forgotten legend. On an ordinary tree trunk which

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he both impels onward and guides with a bamboo, he faces waves which are foaming all around him. The conventional clouds are arranged for a decorative effect, and may have formed the crowning of some panel which decorated the upper part of a temple wall—the specimen is reproduced a quarter of its size.

The art of wood carving presents itself in a very different form in Plate AEG, where we find eight *netsukés*, the tiny objects on which the Japanese so admirably work with all the refinement of their character, their gracefulness, and their care. The netsuké was used as a sort of button on the silken cord which suspended through the girdle the medicine box, the tobacco pouch, or the pipe-case. It was for the Japanese, who were unacquainted with ornaments, precious metals and gems, one of the rare objects of personal decoration which they could be proud of. A fine netsuké in the girdle was the object of general admiration, collectors possessed series of them, which were worn in turn, in the way that Samurais had for the same sword a whole collection of guards, which were used one after the other. There are existing netsukés made of various materials, china, metal, lacquer, but most are in wood or ivory; those in wood are generally the most perfect.

The largest represents a Niô. Mr. Hart, in his article appearing in the present number having explained what a Niô was, there is no reason for a repetition. The object is reproduced in company with the seven others, at three-quarters of its real size. The wood has in time become of a beautiful brown tint, which seems to lend itself better to what makes it more than an ordinary image, the details of bones, muscles, as well as the arrangement of the draperies.

The other personage seems to be, judging from appearance, an exceedingly old piece of work, it is scratched, and the brown tint has only remained in the crevices; it is the image of the ancient inhabitants of Japan, of a "savage," according to the definition of the Japanese.

The artist must have expressly given to his work this look of antiquity, for the invention of netsukés does not date back more than two hundred years. He had certainly not set his eyes on the living beings whom he has represented, and this netsuké is probably a copy of an ancient statue, like those preserved still in the temple at Nara, where are kept at the present time the wondrous gems of secular art due to the primitive inspiration of the Buddhist religion.

The squatting personage who stretches as he yawns represents Dharma, one of the chief saints of Buddhism. The legend states that Dharma, in a spirit of humiliation, condemned himself to remain for ever sitting; his legs became eventually dried up. He also allowed himself no sleep—hence the energy, carried almost to caricature, which the artist has put in his yawning. Also, one day, as Dharma was napping in spite of himself, as punishment for his laxity he cut off his eyelids and cast them away. Bhudda made to grow from them the tea plant which destroys sleep. We shall find on more than one occasion in Japanese art the legend of Dharma as a theme for varied interpretations. The four little masks represent specimens of one of the subjects to which the makers of netsukés take with the utmost kindness.

The exaggerated expression seized by the observing eye of the Japanese, and given with all the spirit of mockery which is at the very foundation of the race, is most strikingly noticeable when one sees a whole collection of different masks together. The general effect of them is so highly comical, even when some of them express an aggravated grief, that one cannot help smiling at the silent comedy, and there is an irresistible laugh in store for those who have the chance of seeing a whole collection of such objects.

Two very different kinds of them have been made, some like those at the foot of the plate, being their productions of theatrical masks, legendary beings (that to the right), or traditional personages (that to the left, which is some noble of the theatre), while in others, the artist has determined to inspire an intense life-likeness into the face he carved.

Plate AFJ represents a temple candlestick in china, designed from the acrobatic performances of three monkeys; the last of which has a lotus leaf on his head to hold the spike on which the wax light was held.

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- AEH. Two Pages of the "Man-gwa." By Hokusai.
- AAA. A Bird, and Flowers. School of Shijo.
- ADI. Industrial Design. Bamboo.
- AAI. Night Fête. By Utamaro. (Double Plate.)
- BF. Industrial Design. Flowers.
- AEG. Eight Netsukés.
- AFJ. Temple Candlestick, in Porcelain.
- IG. Coloured Wood-Carving.



鶴の図





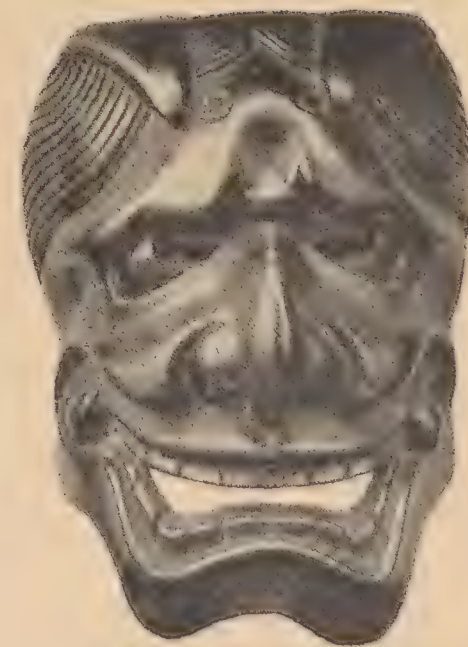
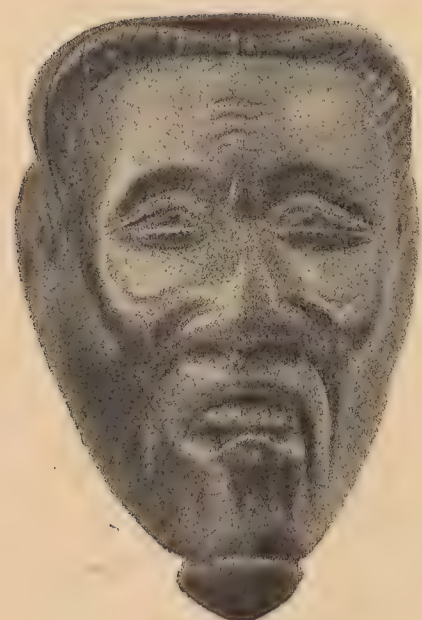
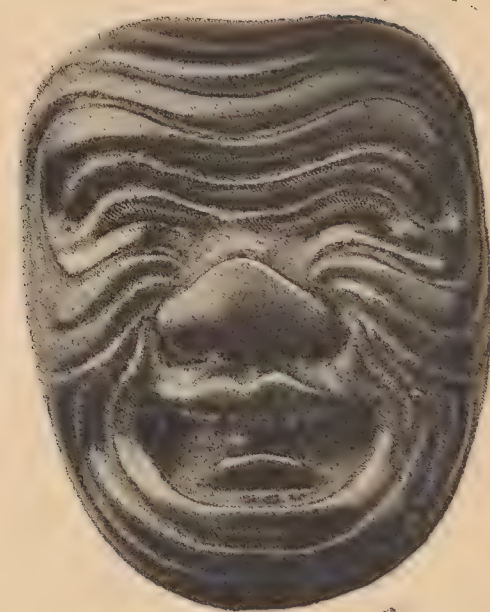
















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